













THE LIFE  
OF  
GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY  
WASHINGTON IRVING.

*IN FOUR VOLUMES.*

VOLUME III.



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# LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

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# LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

## CHAPTER I.

**PREPARATIONS OF SIR HENRY CLINTON — STATE OF THE HIGHLAND DEFENCES — PUTNAM ALARMED — ADVANCE OF THE ARMAMENT UP THE HUDSON — PLAN OF SIR HENRY CLINTON — PEEKSKILL THREATENED — PUTNAM DECEIVED — SECRET MARCH OF THE ENEMY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS — FORTS MONTGOMERY AND CLINTON OVERPOWERED — NARROW ESCAPE OF THE COMMANDERS — CONFLAGRATION AND EXPLOSION OF THE AMERICAN FRIGATES — RALLYING EFFORTS OF PUTNAM AND GOVERNOR CLINTON — THE SPY AND THE SILVER BULLET — ESOPUS BURNT — RAVAGING PROGRESS OF THE ENEMY UP THE HUDSON.**

The expedition of Sir Henry Clinton had awaited the arrival of re-enforcements from Europe, which were slowly crossing the ocean in Dutch bottoms. At length they arrived, after a three months' voyage, and now there was a stir of warlike preparation at New York; the streets were full of soldiery, the bay full of ships; and water craft of all kinds were plying about the harbor. Between three and four thousand men were to be embarked on board of ships-of-war, armed galleys and flat-bottomed boats. A southern destination was given out, but shrewd observers surmised the real one.

The defences of the Highlands, on which the security of the Hudson depended, were at this time weakly garrisoned; some of the troops having been sent off to re-enforce the armies on the Delaware and in the North. Putnam, who had the general command of the Highlands, had but eleven hundred Continental and four hundred militia troops with him at Peekskill, his headquarters. There was a feeble garrison at Fort Independence, in the vicinity of Peekskill, to guard the public stores and workshops at Continental Village.

The Highland forts, Clinton, Montgomery, and Constitution, situated among the mountains and forming their main defence, were no better garrisoned, and George Clinton, who had the command of them, and who was in a manner the champion of the Highlands, was absent from his post, attending the State Legislature at Kingston (Esopus), in Ulster County, in his capacity of governor.

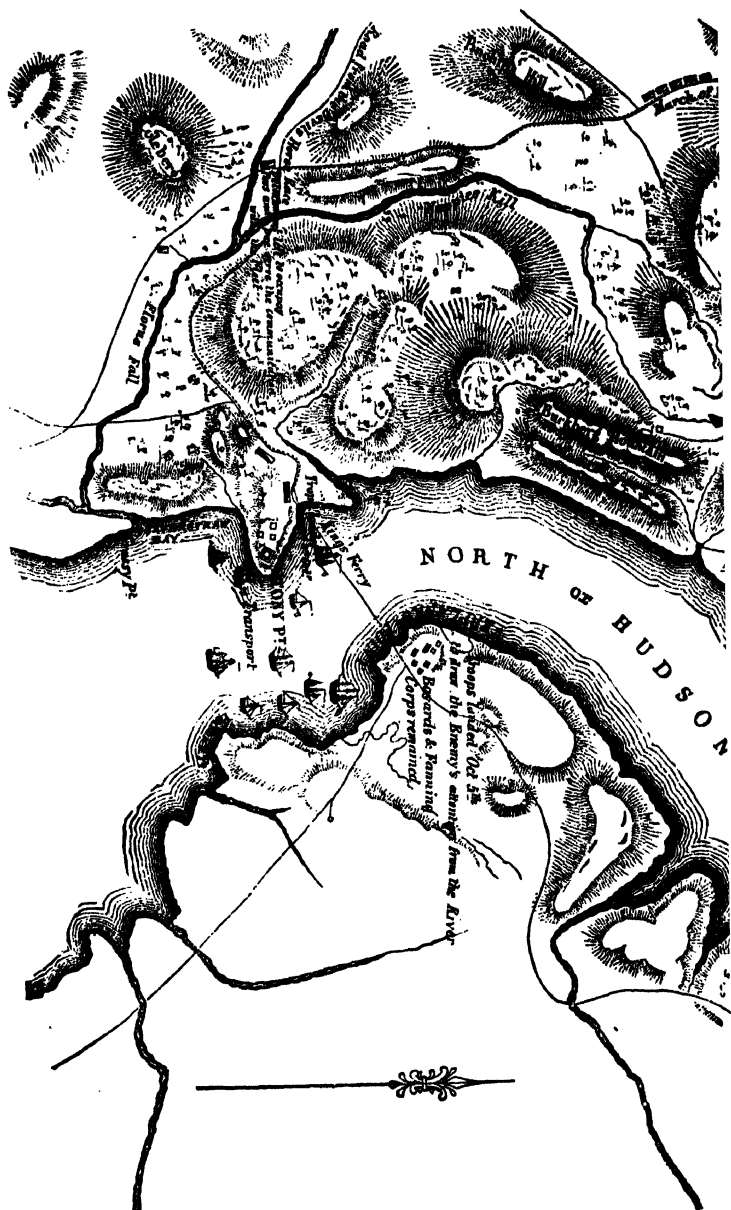
There were patriot eyes in New York to watch the course of events, and patriot boats on the river to act as swift messengers. On the 29th of September Putnam writes to his coadjutor the governor: "I have received intelligence on which I can fully depend, that the enemy had received a re-enforcement at New York last Thursday, of about three thousand British and foreign troops; that General Clinton has called in guides who belong about Croton River; has ordered hard bread to be baked; that the troops are called from Paulus Hook to King's Bridge, and the whole troops are now under marching orders. I think it highly probable the designs of the enemy are against the posts of the Highlands, or of some part of the counties of Westchester or Dutchess." Under these circumstances he begged a re-enforcement of the militia to enable him to maintain his post, and intimated a wish for the personal assistance and counsel of the governor. In a postscript, he adds: "The ships are drawn up in the river, and I believe nothing prevents them from paying us an immediate visit, but a contrary wind."

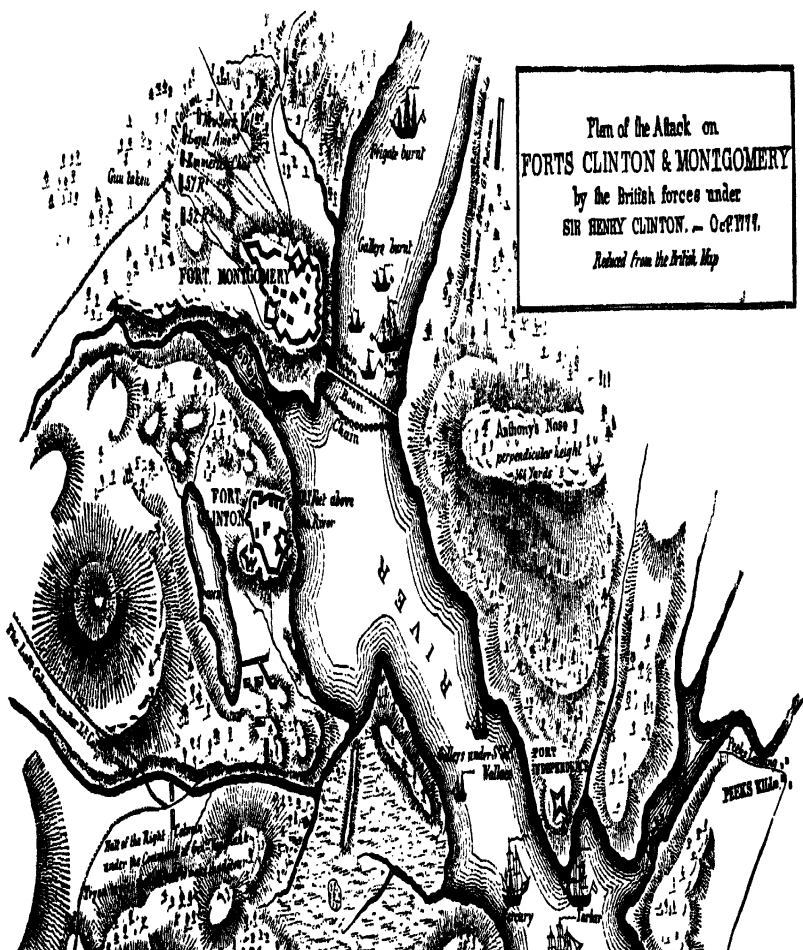
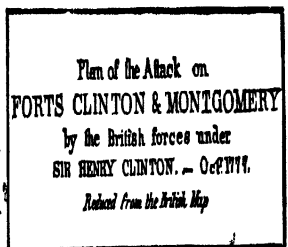
On receiving this letter the governor forthwith hastened to his post in the Highlands, with such militia force as he could collect. We have heretofore spoken of his Highland citadel Fort Montgomery, and of the obstructions of chain, boom, and chevaux-de-frise between it and the opposite promontory of Anthony's Nose, with which it had been hoped to barricade the Hudson. The chain had repeatedly given way under the pressure of the tide, but the obstructions were still considered efficient, and were protected by the guns of the fort, and of two frigates and two armed galleys anchored above.

Fort Clinton had subsequently been erected within rifle shot of Fort Montgomery, to occupy ground which commanded it. A deep ravine and stream called Peplœp's Kill, intervened between the two forts, across which there was a bridge. The governor had his head-quarters in Fort Montgomery, which was the northern and largest fort, but its works were unfinished. His brother James had charge of Fort Clinton, which was complete. The whole force to garrison the associate forts did not exceed six hundred men, chiefly militia, but they had the vet-











eran Colonel Lamb of the artillery with them, who had served in Canada, and a company of his artillerists was distributed in the two forts.

The armament of Sir Henry Clinton, which had been waiting for a wind, set sail in the course of a day or two and stood up the Hudson, dogged by American swift-rowing whale-boats. Late at night of the 4th of October came a barge across the river from Peekskill to Fort Montgomery, bearing a letter from Putnam to the governor. "This morning," writes he, "we had information from our guard boats, that there were two ships-of-war, three tenders, and a large number of flat-bottomed boats, coming up the river. They proceeded up as far as Tarrytown, where they landed their men. This evening they were followed by one large man-of-war, five topsail vessels, and a large number of small craft. I have sent off parties to examine their route and harass their march, if prudent. By information from several different quarters, we have reason to believe they intend for this post. They are now making up, as we hear, for the Croton Bridge."<sup>1</sup>

The landing of troops at Tarrytown was a mere feint on the part of Sir Henry to distract the attention of the Americans; after marching a few miles into the country, they returned and re-embarked; the armament continued across the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay to Verplanck's Point, where, on the 5th, Sir Henry landed with three thousand men about eight miles below Peekskill.

Putnam drew back to the hills in the rear of the village, to prepare for the expected attack, and sent off to Governor Clinton for all the troops he could spare. So far the manœuvres of Sir Henry Clinton had been successful. It was his plan to threaten an attack on Peekskill and Fort Independence, and, when he had drawn the attention of the American commanders to that quarter, to land troops on the western shore of the Hudson, below the Dunderberg (Thunder Hill), make a rapid march through the defiles behind that mountain to the rear of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, come down on them by surprise, and carry them by a *coup de main*.

Accordingly at an early hour of the following morning, taking advantage of a thick fog, he crossed with two thousand men to Stony Point, on the west shore of the river, leaving about a thousand men, chiefly royalists, at Verplanck's Point, to keep up a threatening aspect towards Peekskill. Three frigates,

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence of the Revolution. Sparks, ii. 637.

also, were to stand up what is called the Devil's Horse Race into Peekskill Bay, and station themselves within cannon-shot of Fort Independence.

The crossing of the troops had been dimly descried from Peekskill, but they were supposed to be a mere detachment from the main body on a maraud.

Having accomplished his landing, Sir Henry, conducted by a tory guide, set out on a forced and circuitous march of several miles by rugged defiles, round the western base of the Dunderberg. At the entrance of the pass he left a small force to guard it, and keep up his communication with the ships. By eight o'clock in the morning he had effected his march round the Dunderberg, and halted on the northern side in a ravine, between it and a conical mount called Bear Hill. The possibility of an enemy's approach by this pass had been noticed by Washington in reconnoitring the Highlands, and he had mentioned it in his instructions to Generals Greene and Knox, when they were sent to make their military survey, but they considered it impracticable, from the extreme difficulty of the mountain passes. It is in defiance of difficulties, however, that surprises are apt to be attempted, and the most signal have been achieved in the face of seeming impossibilities.

In the ravine between the Dunderberg and Bear Hill, Sir Henry divided his forces. One division, nine hundred strong, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, was to make a circuit through the forest round the western side of Bear Hill, so as to gain the rear of Fort Montgomery. After Sir Henry had allowed sufficient time for them to make the circuit, he was to proceed with the other division down the ravine, towards the river, turn to the left along a narrow strip of land between the Hudson and a small lake called Sinipink Pond, which lay at the foot of Bear Hill, and advance upon Fort Clinton. Both forts were to be attacked at the same time.

The detachment under Campbell set off in high spirits; it was composed partly of royalists, led by Colonel Beverly Robinson of New York, partly of Emerick's chasseurs, and partly of grenadiers, under Lord Rawdon, then about twenty-four years of age, who had already seen service at Bunker's Hill. With him went Count Gabroutski, a Polish nobleman, aide-de-camp to Sir Henry Clinton, but who had sought to accompany his friend, Lord Rawdon, in this wild mountain scramble. Every thing thus far had been conducted with celerity and apparent secrecy, and complete surprise of both forts was anticipated. Sir Henry had, indeed, outwitted one of the guardi-

ans of the Highlands, but the other was aware of his designs. Governor Clinton, on receiving intelligence of ships-of-war coming up the Hudson, had sent scouts beyond the Dunderberg to watch their movements. Early on the present morning, word had been brought him that forty boats were landing a large force at Stony Point. He now, in his turn, apprehended an attack, and sent to Putnam for re-enforcements, preparing, in the mean time, to make such defence as his scanty means afforded.

A lieutenant was sent out with thirty men from Fort Clinton, to proceed along the river-road and reconnoitre. He fell in with the advance guard of Sir Henry Clinton's division, and retreated skirmishing to the fort. A large detachment was sent out to check the approach of the enemy on this side; while sixty men, afterwards increased to a hundred, took post with a brass field-piece in the Bear Hill defile.

It was a narrow and rugged pass, bordered by shagged forests. As Campbell and his division came pressing forward, they were checked by the discharge of fire-arms and of the brass field-piece, which swept the steep defile. The British troops then filed off on each side into the woods, to surround the Americans. The latter, finding it impossible to extricate their field-piece in the rugged pass, spiked it, and retreated into the fort, under cover of the fire of a twelve-pounder, with which Lamb had posted himself on the crest of a hill.

Sir Henry Clinton had met with equally obstinate opposition in his approach to Fort Clinton; the narrow strip of land between Lake Sinipink and the Hudson, along which he advanced, being fortified by an abatis. By four o'clock the Americans were driven within their works, and both forts were assailed. The defence was desperate; for Governor Clinton was a hard fighter, and he was still in hopes of re-enforcements from Putnam; not knowing that the messenger he sent to him had turned traitor, and deserted to the enemy.

About five o'clock, he was summoned to surrender in five minutes, to prevent the effusion of blood: the reply was a refusal. About ten minutes afterwards, there was a general attack upon both forts. It was resisted with obstinate spirit. The action continued until dusk. The ships under Commodore Hotham approached near enough to open an irregular fire upon the forts, and upon the vessels anchored above the chevaux-de-frise. The latter returned the fire; and the flash and roar of their cannonry in the gathering darkness and among the echoes for the mountains increased the terrors of the strife. The

works, however, were too extensive to be manned by the scanty garrisons; they were entered by different places and carried at the point of the bayonet; the Americans fought desperately from one redoubt to another; some were slain, some taken prisoners, and some escaped under cover of the night to the river or the mountains. "The garrison," writes Clinton, significantly, "had to fight their way out as many as could, as we determined not to surrender."

His brother James was saved from a deadly thrust of a bayonet, by a garrison orderly-book in his pocket; but he received a flesh-wound in the thigh. He slid down a precipice, one hundred feet high, into the ravine between the forts, and escaped to the woods. The governor leaped down the rocks to the river side, where a boat was putting off with a number of the fugitives. They turned back to receive him, but he generously refused to endanger their safety, as the boat was already loaded to the gunwale. It was only on receiving assurance of its being capable of bearing his additional weight, that he consented to enter. The boat crossed the Hudson in safety, and before midnight the governor was with Putnam, at Continental Village, concerting further measures.

Putnam had been completely outmanœuvred by Sir Henry Clinton. He had continued until late in the morning, in the belief that Peekskill and Fort Independence were to be the objects of attack. His pickets and scouts could not ascertain the number of the enemy remaining on the east side of the river; a large fire near Stony Point made him think the troops which had crossed were merely burning store-houses; while ships, galleys, and flat-bottomed boats seemed preparing to land forces at Fort Independence and Peekskill. In the course of the morning he sallied forth with Brigadier-General Parsons, to reconnoitre the ground near the enemy. After their return they were alarmed, he says, by "a very heavy and hot firing both of small arms and cannon, at Fort Montgomery," which must have made a tremendous uproar among the echoes of the Dunderberg. Aware of the real point of danger, he immediately detached five hundred men to re-enforce the garrison. They had six miles to march along the eastern shore, and then to cross the river; before they could do so the fate of the forts was decided.

British historians acknowledge, that the valor and resolution displayed by the Americans in the defence of these forts were in no instance exceeded during the war; their loss in killed, wounded and missing, was stated at two hundred and fifty, a



large proportion of the number engaged. Their gallant defence awakened no generous sentiment in the victors. "As the soldiers," observes the British writer, "were much irritated, as well by the fatigue they had undergone and the opposition they met, as by the loss of some brave and favorite officers, the slaughter of the enemy was considerable."<sup>1</sup>

Among the officers thus deplored, and bloodily revenged, was Colonel Campbell, who commanded the detachment. At his fall the command devolved on Colonel Beverly Robinson of the American loyalists. Another officer slain was Major Grant, of the New York volunteers. Count Gabrouski, the Polish aide-de-camp of Sir Henry Clinton, had gallantly signalized himself by the side of his friend, Lord Rawdon, who led the grenadiers in storming Fort Montgomery. The count received his death wound at the foot of the ramparts. Giving his sword to a grenadier: "Take this sword to Lord Rawdon," said he, "and tell him the owner died like a soldier."<sup>2</sup>

On the capture of the forts, the American frigates and galleys stationed for the protection of the *chevaux-de-frise* slipped their cables, made all sail, and endeavored to escape up the river. The wind, however, proved adverse; there was danger of their falling into the hands of the enemy; the crews, therefore, set them on fire and abandoned them. As every sail was set, the vessels, we are told, were soon "magnificent pyramids of fire;" the surrounding mountains were lit up by the glare, and a train of ruddy light gleamed along the river. They were in a part of the Highlands famous for its echoes: as the flames gradually reached the loaded cannon, their thundering reports were multiplied and prolonged along the rocky shores. The vessels at length blew up with tremendous explosions, and all again was darkness.<sup>3</sup>

On the following morning, the *chevaux-de-frise* and other obstructions between Fort Montgomery and Anthony's Nose were cleared away: the Americans evacuated Forts Independence and Constitution, and a free passage up the Hudson was open for the British ships. Sir Henry Clinton proceeded no further in person, but left the rest of the enterprise to be accomplished by Sir James Wallace and General Vaughan, with a flying squadron of light frigates, and a considerable detachment of troops.

Putnam had retreated to a pass in the mountains, on the east side of the river, near Fishkill, having removed as much of the

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<sup>1</sup> Civil War in America, vol. i. p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> Stedman, vol. i. p. 364.

<sup>3</sup> Idem.

stores and baggage as possible from the post he had abandoned. The old general was somewhat mortified at having been outwitted by the enemy, but endeavored to shift the responsibility. In a letter to Washington (October 8), he writes: "I have repeatedly informed your Excellency of the enemy's design against this post; but, from some motive or other, you always differed from me in opinion. As this conjecture of mine has for once proved right, I cannot omit informing you that my real and sincere opinion is, that they now mean to join General Burgoyne with the utmost despatch. Governor Clinton is exerting himself in collecting the militia of this state. Brigadier-General Parsons I have sent off to forward in the Connecticut militia, which are now arriving in great numbers. I therefore hope and trust, that, in the course of a few days, I shall be able to oppose the progress of the enemy."

He had concerted with Governor Clinton that they should move to the northward with their forces, along the opposite shores of the Hudson, endeavoring to keep pace with the enemy's ships and cover the country from their attacks.

The governor was in the neighborhood of New Windsor, just above the Highlands, where he had posted himself to rally what he termed his "broken but brave troops," and to call out the militia of Ulster and Orange. "I am persuaded," writes he, "if the militia will join me, we can save the country from destruction, and defeat the enemy's design of assisting their Northern army." The militia, however, were not as prompt as usual in answering to the call of their popular and brave-hearted governor. "They are well disposed," writes he, "but anxious about the immediate safety of their respective families (who, for many miles, are yet moving further from the river); they come in the morning and return in the evening, and I never know when I have them, or what my strength is."<sup>1</sup>

On the 9th, two persons coming from Fort Montgomery were arrested by his guards, and brought before him for examination. One was much agitated, and was observed to put something hastily into his mouth and swallow it. An emetic was administered, and brought up a small silver bullet. Before he could be prevented he swallowed it again. On his refusing a second emetic, the governor threatened to have him hanged and his body opened. The threat produced the bullet in the preceding manner. It was oval in form, and hollow, with a screw in the centre, and contained a note from Sir Henry Clin-

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Council of Safety. Jour. of Provincial Congress, vol. i. 1064.

ton to Burgoyne, written on a slip of thin paper, and dated (October 8), from Fort Montgomery. "*Nous y voici* (here we are), and nothing between us and Gates. I sincerely hope this little success of ours will facilitate your operations."<sup>1</sup>

The bearer of the letter was tried and convicted as a spy, and sentenced to be hanged.

The enemy's light-armed vessels were now making their way up the river; landing marauding parties occasionally to make depredations.

As soon as the governor could collect a little force, he pressed forward to protect Kingston (Esopus), the seat of the State legislature. The enemy in the mean time landed from their ships, routed about one hundred and fifty militia collected to oppose them, marched to the village, set fire to it in every part, consuming great quantities of stores collected there, and then retreated to their ships.

Governor Clinton was two hours too late. He beheld the flames from a distance; and having brought with him the spy, the bearer of the silver bullet, he hanged him on an apple-tree in sight of the burning village.

Having laid Kingston, the seat of the State government, in ashes, the enemy proceeded in their ravages, destroying the residences of conspicuous patriots at Rhinebeck, Livingston Manor, and elsewhere, and among others the mansion of the widow of the brave General Montgomery: trusting to close their desolating career by a triumphant junction with Burgoyne at Albany.

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<sup>1</sup> Governor Clinton to the N. Y. Council of Safety. Journal of Prov. Cong.

## CHAPTER II.

SCARCITY IN THE BRITISH CAMP — GATES ABIDES HIS TIME — FORAGING MOVEMENT OF BURGOTNE — BATTLE OF THE 7th OCTOBER — ROUT OF THE BRITISH AND HESSIANS — SITUATION OF THE BARONESS RIEDESEL AND LADY HARRIET ACKLAND DURING THE BATTLE — DEATH OF GENERAL FRASER — HIS FUNERAL — NIGHT RETREAT OF THE BRITISH — EXPEDITION OF LADY HARRIET ACKLAND — DESPERATE SITUATION OF BURGOTNE AT SARATOGA — CAPITULATION — SURRENDER — CONDUCT OF THE AMERICAN TROOPS — SCENES IN THE CAMP — GALLANT COURTESY OF SCHUYLER TO THE BARONESS RIEDESEL — HIS MAGNANIMOUS CONDUCT TOWARD BURGOTNE — RETURN OF THE BRITISH DOWN THE HUDSON.

WHILE Sir Henry Clinton had been thundering in the Highlands, Burgoyne and his army had been wearing out hope within their intrenchments, vigilantly watched, but unassailed by the Americans. They became impatient even of this impunity. "The enemy, though he can bring four times more soldiers against us, shows no desire to make an attack," writes a Hessian officer.<sup>1</sup>

Arnold, too, was chafing in the camp, and longing for a chance, as usual, "to right himself," by his sword. In a letter to Gates he tries to goad him on. "I think it my duty (which nothing shall deter me from doing) to acquaint you, the army are clamorous for action. The militia (who compose great part of the army) are already threatening to go home. One fortnight's inaction will, I make no doubt, lessen your army by sickness and desertion, at least four thousand men. In which time the enemy may be re-enforced, and make good their retreat.

"I have reason to think, from the intelligence since received, that, had we improved the 20th of September, it might have ruined the enemy. That is past; let me entreat you to improve the present time."

Gates was not to be goaded into action; he saw the desperate situation of Burgoyne, and bided his time. "Perhaps," writes he, "despair may dictate to him to risk all upon one throw; he is an old gamester, and in his time has seen all chances. I will

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<sup>1</sup> Schülzer's Briefwechsel.

endeavor to be ready to prevent his good fortune, and, if possible, secure my own.<sup>1</sup>

On the 7th of October, but four or five days remained of the time Burgoyne had pledged himself to await the co-operation of Sir Henry Clinton. He now determined to make a grand movement on the left of the American camp, to discover whether he could force a passage, should it be necessary to advance, or dislodge it from its position, should he have to retreat. Another object was to cover a forage of the army, which was suffering from the great scarcity.

For this purpose fifteen hundred of his best troops, with two twelve-pounders, two howitzers and six six-pounders, were to be led by himself, seconded by Major-Generals Phillips and Riedesel, and Brigadier-General Fraser. "No equal number of men," say the British accounts, "were ever better commanded; and it would have been difficult, indeed, to have matched the men with an equal number."<sup>2</sup>

On leaving his camp, Burgoyne committed the guard of it on high grounds to Brigadier-Generals Hamilton and Specht, and of the redoubts on the low grounds near the river, to Brigadier-General Gall.

Forming his troops within three-quarters of a mile of the left of the Americans, though covered from their sight by the forest, he sent out a corps of rangers, provincials and Indians, to skulk through the woods, get in their rear, and give them an alarm at the time the attack took place in front.

The movement, though carried on behind the screen of forests, was discovered. In the afternoon the advanced guard of the American centre beat to arms: the alarm was repeated throughout the line. Gates ordered his officers to their alarm posts, and sent forth Wilkinson, the adjutant-general, to inquire the cause. From a rising ground in an open place he descried the enemy in force, their foragers busy in a field of wheat, the officers reconnoitring the left wing of the camp with telescopes from the top of a cabin.

Returning to the camp, Wilkinson reported the position and movements of the enemy; that their front was open, their flanks rested on woods, under cover of which they might be attacked, and their right was skirted by a height; that they were reconnoitring the left, and he thought offered battle.

"Well, then," replied Gates, "order out Morgan to begin the game."

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Governor Clinton. Gates's Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Civil War in America, i. 302.

A plan of attack was soon arranged. Morgan with his riflemen and a body of infantry was sent to make a circuit through the woods, and get possession of the heights on the right of the enemy, while General Poor with his brigade of New York and New Hampshire troops, and a part of Learned's brigade, were to advance against the enemy's left. Morgan was to make an attack on the heights as soon as he should hear the fire opened below.

Burgoyne now drew out his troops in battle array. The grenadiers, under Major Ackland, with the artillery, under Major Williams, formed his left, and were stationed on a rising ground, with a rivulet called Mill Creek in front. Next to them were the Hessians, under Riedesel, and British, under Phillips, forming the centre. The light infantry, under Lord Balcarras, formed the extreme right; having in the advance a detachment of five hundred picked men, under General Fraser, ready to flank the Americans as soon as they should be attacked in front.

He had scarce made these arrangements, when he was astonished and confounded by a thundering of artillery on his left, and a rattling fire of rifles on the woody heights on his right. The troops under Poor advanced steadily up the ascent where Ackland's grenadiers and Williams' artillery were stationed; received their fire, and then rushed forward. Ackland's grenadiers received the first brunt, but it extended along the line, as detachment after detachment arrived, and was carried on with inconceivable fury. The Hessian artillerists spoke afterwards of the heedlessness with which the Americans rushed upon the cannon, while they were discharging grape-shot. The artillery was repeatedly taken and retaken, and at length remained in the possession of the Americans, who turned it upon its former owners. Major Ackland was wounded in both legs, and taken prisoner. Major Williams of the artillery was also captured. The headlong impetuosity of the attack confounded the regular tacticians. Much of this has been ascribed to the presence and example of Arnold. That daring officer, who had lingered in the camp in expectation of a fight, was exasperated at having no command assigned him. On hearing the din of battle, he could restrain no longer his warlike impulse but threw himself on his horse and sallied forth. Gates saw him issuing from the camp. "He'll do some rash thing!" cried he, and sent his aide-de-camp, Major Armstrong, to call him back. Arnold surmised his errand and evaded it. Putting spurs to his horse, he dashed into the scene of action, and was received with acclamation. Being the superior officer in the field his orders were obeyed, of

course. Putting himself at the head of the troops of Learned's brigade, he attacked the Hessians in the enemy's centre, and broke them with repeated charges. Indeed, for a time his actions seemed to partake of frenzy; riding hither and thither, brandishing his sword, and cheering on the men to acts of desperation. In one of his paroxysms of excitement, he struck and wounded an American officer in the head with his sword, without, as he afterwards declared, being conscious of the act. Wilkinson asserts that he was partly intoxicated; but Arnold needed only his own irritated pride and the smell of gunpowder to rouse him to acts of madness.

Morgan, in the mean time, was harassing the enemy's right wing with an incessant fire of small-arms, and preventing it from sending any assistance to the centre. General Fraser with his chosen corps, for some time rendered great protection to this wing. Mounted on an iron-gray charger, his uniform of a field officer made him a conspicuous object for Morgan's sharpshooters. One bullet cut the crupper of his horse, another grazed his mane. "You are singled out, general," said his aide-de-camp, "and had better shift your ground." "My duty forbids me to fly from danger," was the reply. A moment afterwards he was shot down by a marksman posted in a tree. Two grenadiers bore him to the camp. His fall was as a death-blow to his corps. The arrival on the field of a large re-enforcement of New York troops under General Ten Broeck, completed the confusion. Burgoyne saw that the field was lost, and now only thought of saving his camp. The troops nearest to the lines were ordered to throw themselves within them, while Generals Phillips and Riedesel covered the retreat of the main body, which was in danger of being cut off. The artillery was abandoned, all the horses, and most of the men who had so bravely defended it, having been killed. The troops, though hard pressed, retired in good order. Scarcely had they entered the camp when it was stormed with great fury; the Americans, with Arnold at their head, rushing to the lines under a severe discharge of grape-shot and small-arms. Lord Balcarras defended the intrenchments bravely; the action was fierce, and well sustained on either side. After an ineffectual attempt to make his way into the camp in this quarter at the point of the bayonet, Arnold spurred his horse toward the right flank of the camp occupied by the German reserve, where Lieutenant-Colonel Brooks was making a general attack with a Massachusetts regiment. Here, with a part of a platoon, he forced his way into a sallyport, but a shot from the retreating Hessians killed his

horse, and wounded him in the same leg which had received a wound before Quebec. He was borne off from the field, but not until the victory was complete; for the Germans retreated from the works, leaving on the field their brave defender, Lieutenant-Colonel Breyman, mortally wounded.

The night was now closing in. The victory of the Americans was decisive. They had routed the enemy, killed and wounded a great number, made many prisoners, taken their field artillery, and gained possession of a part of their works which laid open the right and the rear of their camp. They lay all night on their arms, within half a mile of the scene of action, prepared to renew the assault upon the camp in the morning. Affecting scenes had occurred in the enemy's camp during this deadly conflict.

In the morning previous to the battle, the Baroness De Riedesel had breakfasted with her husband in the camp. Generals Burgoyne, Phillips, and Fraser were to dine with her husband and herself, in a house in the neighborhood, where she and her children were quartered. She observed much movement in the camp, but was quieted by the assurance that it was to be a mere reconnoissance. On her way home she met a number of Indians, painted and decorated and armed with guns, and shouting war! war! Her fears were awakened, and scarce had she reached home when she heard the rattling of fire-arms and the thundering of artillery. The din increased, and soon became so terrible that she "was more dead than alive." About one o'clock came one of the generals who were to have dined with her — poor General Fraser — brought upon a handbarrow, mortally wounded. "The table," writes she, "which was already prepared for dinner, was immediately removed, and a bed placed in its stead for the general. I sat terrified and trembling in a corner. The noise grew more alarming, and I was in a continual agony and tremor, while thinking that my husband might soon, also, be brought in, wounded like General Fraser. That poor general said to the surgeon, 'Tell me the truth, is there no hope?' — There was none. Prayers were read, after which he desired that General Burgoyne should be requested to have him buried on the next day at six o'clock in the evening, on a hill where a breastwork had been constructed."

Lady Harriet Ackland was in a tent near by. News came to her that her husband was mortally wounded and taken prisoner. She was in an agony of distress. The baroness endeavored to persuade her that his wound might not be dangerous, and



advised her to ask permission to join him. She divided the night between soothing attentions to Lady Harriet, and watchful care of her children who were asleep, but who she feared might disturb the poor dying general. Towards morning, thinking his agony approaching, she wrapped them in blankets and retired with them into the entrance hall. Courteous even in death, the general sent her several messages to beg her pardon for the trouble he thought he was giving her. At eight o'clock in the morning he expired.<sup>1</sup>

Burgoyne had shifted his position during the night, to heights about a mile to the north, close to the river, and covered in front by a ravine. Early in the morning, the Americans took possession of the camp which he had abandoned. A random fire of artillery and small-arms was kept up on both sides during the day. The British sharpshooters stationed in the ravine did some execution, and General Lincoln was wounded in the leg while reconnoitring. Gates, however, did not think it advisable to force a desperate enemy when in a strong position, at the expense of a prodigal waste of blood. He took all measures to cut off his retreat and insure a surrender. General Fellows, with 1,400 men, had already been sent to occupy the high ground east of the Hudson opposite Saratoga Ford. Other detachments were sent higher up the river in the direction of Lake George.

Burgoyne saw that nothing was left for him but a prompt and rapid retreat to Saratoga, yet in this he was delayed by a melancholy duty of friendship; it was to attend the obsequies of the gallant Fraser, who, according to his dying request, was to be interred at six o'clock in the evening, within a redoubt which had been constructed on a hill.

Between sunset and dark, his body was borne to the appointed place by grenadiers of his division, followed by the generals and their staffs. The Americans seeing indistinctly what, in the twilight, appeared to be a movement of troops up the hill and in the redoubt, pointed their artillery in that direction. "Cannon balls flew around and above the assembled mourners," writes the Baroness Riedesel, who was a spectator from a distance. "Many cannon balls flew close by me, but my whole attention was engaged by the funeral scene, where I saw my husband exposed to imminent danger. This, indeed, was not a moment to be apprehensive for my own safety. General Gates protested afterwards, that had he known what was going on, he would have stopped the fire immediately."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Riedesel's Memoirs.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, p. 171.

We have the scene still more feelingly described by Burgoyne.

"The incessant cannonade during the ceremony; the steady attitude and unaltered voice with which the chaplain officiated, though frequently covered with dust which the shot threw up on all sides of him; the mute, but expressive mixture of sensibility and indignation upon every countenance; these objects will remain to the last of life upon the mind of every man who was present. The growing darkness added to the scenery, and the whole marked a character of that juncture which would make one of the finest subjects for the pencil of a master that the field ever exhibited. To the canvas and to the faithful page of a more important historian, gallant friend! I consign thy memory. There may thy talents, thy manly virtues, their progress and their period, find due distinction: and long may they survive, long after the frail record of my pen shall be forgotten!"

General Fraser was well worthy of this eulogium. He was the most popular officer of the army, and one of the most efficient. He was one in whom Burgoyne reposed the most implicit confidence, and deeply must it have added to his gloom of mind at this dark hour of his fortunes, to have this his friend and counsellor, and brother in arms shot down at his side.

"The reflections arising from these scenes," writes he, "gave place to the perplexities of the night. A defeated army was to retreat from an enemy flushed with success, much superior in front, and occupying strong posts in the country behind. We were equally liable upon that march to be attacked in front, flank, or rear."

Preparations had been made to decamp immediately after the funeral, and at nine o'clock at night the retreat commenced. Large fires had been lighted, and many tents were left standing to conceal the movement. The hospital, in which were about three hundred sick and wounded, was abandoned, as were likewise several bateaux, laden with baggage and provisions.

It was a dismal retreat. The rain fell in torrents; the roads were deep and broken, and the horses weak and half-starved from want of forage. At daybreak there was a halt to refresh the troops, and give time for the bateaux laden with provision to come abreast. In three hours the march was resumed, but before long there was another halt, to guard against an American reconnoitring party which appeared in sight. When the troops were again about to march, General Burgoyne received a message from Lady Harriet Ackland, expressing

a wish to pass to the American camp, and ask permission from General Gates to join her husband. "Though I was ready to believe," writes Burgoyne " (for I had experience), that patience and fortitude, in a supreme degree, were to be found, as well as every other virtue, under the most tender forms, I was astonished at this proposal. After so long an agitation of spirits, exhausted not only for want of rest, but absolutely want of food, drenched in rains for twelve hours together, that a woman should be capable of such an undertaking as delivering herself to the enemy, probably in the night, and uncertain of what hands she might first fall into, appeared an effort above human nature. The assistance I was enabled to give her was small indeed; I had not even a cup of wine to offer her; but I was told she had found from some kind and fortunate hand, a little rum and dirty water. All I could furnish her was an open boat, and a few lines written upon dirty wet paper to General Gates, recommending her to his protection.

"Mr. Brudenell, the chaplain of the artillery (the same gentleman who had officiated so signally at General Fraser's funeral), readily undertook to accompany her, and with one female servant, and the major's valet-de-chambre (who had a ball which he had received in the late action then in his shoulder), she rowed down the river to meet the enemy."

The night was far advanced before the boat reached the American outposts. It was challenged by a sentinel who threatened to fire into it should it attempt to pass. Mr. Brudenell made known that it was a flag of truce, and stated who was the personage it brought; report was made to the adjutant-general. Treachery was apprehended, and word was returned to detain the flag until daylight. Lady Harriet and her companions were allowed to land. Major Dearborn, the officer on guard, surrendered his chamber in the guard-house to her ladyship; bedding was brought, a fire was made, tea was served, and her mind being relieved by assurances of her husband's safety, she was enabled to pass a night of comparative comfort and tranquillity.<sup>1</sup> She proceeded to the American camp in the morning, when, Burgoyne acknowledges, "she was received and accommodated by General Gates, with all the humanity and respect that her rank, her merits, and her fortune deserved."

To resume the fortunes of the retreating army. It rained terribly through the residue of the 9th, and in consequence of repeated halts, they did not reach Saratoga until evening. A

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<sup>1</sup> The statement here given is founded on the report made to General Wilkinson by Major (afterward General) Dearborn. It varies from that of Burgoyne.

detachment of Americans had arrived there before them, and were throwing up intrenchments on a commanding height at Fishkill. They abandoned their work, forded the Hudson, and joined a force under General Fellows, posted on the hills east of the river. The bridge over the Fishkill had been destroyed; the artillery could not cross until the ford was examined. Exhausted by fatigue, the men for the most part had not strength nor inclination to cut wood nor make fire, but threw themselves upon the wet ground in their wet clothes, and slept under the continuing rain. "I was quite wet," writes the Baroness Riedesel, "and was obliged to remain in that condition for want of a place to change my apparel. I seated myself near a fire and undressed the children, and we then laid ourselves upon some straw."

At daylight on the 10th, the artillery and the last of the troops passed the fords of the Fishkill, and took a position upon the heights, and in the redoubts formerly constructed there. To protect the troops from being attacked in passing the ford by the Americans, who were approaching, Burgoyne ordered fire to be set to the farm-houses and other buildings on the south side of the Fishkill. Amongst the rest, the noble mansion of General Schuyler, with store-houses, granaries, mills, and the other appurtenances of a great rural establishment, was entirely consumed. Burgoyne himself estimated the value of property destroyed at ten thousand pounds sterling. The measure was condemned by friend as well as foe, but he justified it on the principles of self-preservation.

The force under General Fellows, posted on the opposite hills of the Hudson, now opened a fire from a battery commanding the ford of that river. Thus prevented from crossing, Burgoyne thought to retreat along the west side as far as Fort George, on the way to Canada, and sent out workmen under a strong escort to repair the bridges, and open the road toward Fort Edward. The escort was soon recalled and the work abandoned; for the Americans under Gates appeared in great force, on the heights south of the Fishkill, and seemed preparing to cross and bring on an engagement.

The opposite shores of the Hudson were now lined with detachments of Americans. Bateaux laden with provisions, which had attended the movements of the army, were fired upon, many taken, some retaken with loss of life. It was necessary to land the provisions from such as remained, and bring them up the hill into the camp, which was done under a heavy fire from the American artillery.

Burgoyne called now a general council of war, in which it was resolved, since the bridges could not be repaired, to abandon the artillery and baggage, let the troops carry a supply of provisions upon their backs, push forward in the night, and force their way across the fords at or near Fort Edward.

Before the plan could be put in execution, scouts brought word that the Americans were intrenched opposite those fords, and encamped in force with cannon, on the high ground between Fort Edward and Fort George. In fact, by this time the American army, augmented by militia and volunteers from all quarters, had posted itself in strong positions on both sides of the Hudson, so as to extend three-fourths of a circle round the enemy.

Giving up all further attempt at retreat, Burgoyne now fortified his camp on the heights to the north of Fishkill, still hoping that succor might arrive from Sir Henry Clinton, or that an attack upon his trenches might give him some chance of cutting his way through.

In this situation his troops lay continually on their arms. His camp was subjected to cannonading from Fellows' batteries on the opposite side of the Hudson, Gates's batteries on the south of Fishkill, and a galling fire from Morgan's riflemen, stationed on heights in the rear.

The Baroness De Riedesel and her helpless little ones were exposed to the dangers and horrors of this long turmoil. On the morning when the attack was opened, General De Riedesel sent them to take refuge in a house in the vicinity. On their way thither the baroness saw several men on the opposite bank of the Hudson levelling their muskets and about to fire. Throwing her children in the back part of the carriage the anxious mother endeavored to cover them with her body. The men fired; a poor wounded soldier, who had sought shelter behind the carriage, received a shot which broke his arm. The baroness succeeded in getting to the house. Some women and crippled soldiers had already taken refuge there. It was mistaken for head-quarters and cannonaded. The baroness retreated into the cellar, laid herself in a corner near the door with her children's heads upon her knees, and passed a sleepless night of mental anguish.

In the morning the cannonade began anew. Cannon balls passed through the house repeatedly with a tremendous noise. A poor soldier who was about to have a leg amputated, lost the other by one of these balls. The day was passed among such horrors. The wives of a major, a lieutenant and a commissary,

were her companions in misery. "They sat together," she says. "deploring their situation, when some one entered to announce bad news." There was whispering among her companions, with deep looks of sorrow. "I immediately suspected," says she, "that my husband had been killed. I shrieked aloud." She was soothed by assurances that nothing had happened to him; and was given to understand by a side-long glance, that the wife of the lieutenant was the unfortunate one; her husband had been killed.

For six days, she and her children remained in this dismal place of refuge. The cellar was spacious, with three compartments, but the number of occupants increased. The wounded were brought in to be relieved — or to die. She remained with her children near the door, to escape more easily in case of fire. She put straw under mattresses; on these she lay with her little ones, and her female servants slept near her.

Her frequent dread was, that the army might be driven off or march away, and she be left behind. "I crept up the staircase," says she, "more than once, and when I saw our soldiers near their watchfires, I became more calm, and could even have slept."

There was great distress for water. The river was near, but the Americans shot every one who approached it. A soldier's wife at length summoned resolution, and brought a supply. "The Americans," adds the baroness, "told us afterwards, that they spared her *on account of her sex*."

"I endeavored," continues she, "to dispel my melancholy, by constantly attending to the wounded. I made them tea and coffee, for which I received their warmest acknowledgments. I often shared my dinner with them."

Her husband visited her once or twice daily, at the risk of his life. On one occasion, General Phillips accompanied him, but was overcome when he saw the sufferings and danger by which this noble woman and her children were surrounded, and of which we have given a very subdued picture. "I would not for ten thousand guineas see this place again," exclaimed the general. "I am heart-broken with what I have seen."

Burgoyne was now reduced to despair. His forces were diminished by losses, by the desertion of Canadians and royalists, and the total defection of the Indians; and on inspection it was found that the provisions on hand, even upon short allowance, would not suffice for more than three days. A council of war, therefore, was called of all the generals, field officers and captains commanding troops. The deliberations were brief.

All concurred in the necessity of opening a treaty with General Gates, for a surrender on honorable terms. While they were yet deliberating, an eighteen-pound ball passed through the tent, sweeping across the table round which they were seated.

Negotiations were accordingly opened on the 13th, under sanction of a flag. Lieutenant Kingston, Burgoyne's adjutant-general, was the bearer of a note, proposing a cessation of hostilities until terms could be adjusted.

The first terms offered by Gates were that the enemy should lay down their arms within their intrenchments, and surrender themselves prisoners of war. These were indignantly rejected, with an intimation that, if persisted in, hostilities must recommence.

Counter proposals were then made by General Burgoyne, and finally accepted by General Gates. According to these, the British troops were to march out of the camp with artillery and all the honors of war, to a fixed place, where they were to pile their arms at a word of command from their own officers. They were to be allowed a free passage to Europe upon condition of not serving again in America, during the present war. The army was not to be separated, especially the men from the officers; roll-calling and other regular duties were to be permitted; the officers were to be on parole, and to wear their side-arms. All private property to be sacred; no baggage to be searched or molested. All persons appertaining to or following the camp, whatever might be their country, were to be comprehended in these terms of capitulation.

Schulyer's late secretary, Colonel Varick, who was still in camp, writes to him on the 13th: "Burgoyne says he will send all his general officers at ten, in the morning, to finish and settle the business. This, I trust, will be accomplished before twelve, and then I shall have the honor and happiness of congratulating you on the glorious success of our arms. I wish to God I could say under your command.

"If you wish to see Burgoyne, you will be necessitated to see him here."<sup>1</sup>

In the night of the 16th, before the articles of capitulation had been signed, a British officer from the army below made his way into the camp, with despatches from Sir Henry Clinton, announcing that he had captured the forts in the Highlands, and had pushed detachments further up the Hudson. Burgoyne now submitted to the consideration of officers; "whether

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<sup>1</sup> Schulyer Papers.

it was consistent with public faith, and if so, expedient, to suspend the execution of the treaty, and trust to events." His own opinion inclined in the affirmative, but the majority of the council determined that the public faith was fully plighted. The capitulation was accordingly signed by Burgoyne on the 17th of October.

The British army, at the time of the surrender, was reduced by capture, death, and desertion, from nine thousand to five thousand seven hundred and fifty-two men. That of Gates, regulars and militia, amounted to ten thousand five hundred and fifty-four men on duty; between two and three thousand being on the sick list, or absent on furlough.

By this capitulation, the Americans gained a fine train of artillery, seven thousand stand of arms, and a great quantity of clothing, tents, and military stores of all kinds.

When the British troops marched forth to deposit their arms at the appointed place, Colonel Wilkinson, the adjutant-general, was the only American soldier to be seen. Gates had ordered his troops to keep rigidly within their lines, that they might not add by their presence to the humiliation of a brave enemy. In fact, throughout all his conduct, during the campaign, British writers, and Burgoyne himself, give him credit for acting with great humanity and forbearance.<sup>1</sup>

Wilkinson, in his Memoirs, describes the first meeting of Gates and Burgoyne, which took place at the head of the American camp. They were attended by their staffs and by other general officers. Burgoyne was in a rich royal uniform. Gates in a plain blue frock. When they had approached nearly within sword's length, they reined up and halted. Burgoyne, raising his hat most gracefully, said: "The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner;" to which the other, returning his salute, replied, "I shall always be ready to testify that it has not been through any fault of your excellency."

"We passed through the American camp," writes the already cited Hessian officer, "in which all the regiments were drawn out beside the artillery, and stood under arms. Not one of them was uniformly clad; each had on the clothes which he wore in the fields, the church, or the tavern. They stood, however, like soldiers, well arranged, and with a military air,

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<sup>1</sup> "At the very time," say the British historians, "that General Burgoyne was receiving the most favorable conditions for himself and his ruined army, the fine village or town of Focopus, at no very great distance, was reduced to ashes, and not a house left standing."



in which there was but little to find fault with. All the muskets had bayonets, and the sharp-shooters had rifles. The men all stood so still that we were filled with wonder. Not one of them made a single motion as if he would speak with his neighbor. Nay more, all the lads that stood there in rank and file, kind nature had formed so trim, so slender, so nervous, that it was a pleasure to look at them, and we all were surprised at the sight of such a handsome, well-formed race.<sup>1</sup> "In all earnestness," adds he, "English America surpasses the most of Europe in the growth and looks of its male population. The whole nation has a natural turn and talent for war and a soldier's life."

He made himself somewhat merry, however, with the equipments of the officers. A few wore regimentals; and those fashioned to their own notions as to cut and color, being provided by themselves. Brown coats with sea-green facings, white linings and silver trimmings, and gray coats in abundance, with buff facings and cuffs, and gilt buttons; in short, every variety of pattern.

The brigadiers and generals wore uniforms and belts which designated their rank; but most of the colonels and other officers were in their ordinary clothes; a musket and bayonet in hand, and a cartridge-box or powder-horn over the shoulder. But what especially amused him was the variety of uncouth wigs worn by the officers; the lingerings of an uncouth fashion.

Most of the troops thus noticed were the hastily levied militia, the yeomanry of the country. "There were regular regiments also," he said, "which, for want of time and cloth, were not yet equipped in uniform. These had standards with various emblems and mottoes, some of which had for us a very satirical signification.

"But I must say to the credit of the enemy's regiments," continues he, "that not a man was to be found therein who, as we marched by, made even a sign of taunting, insulting exultation, hatred, or any other evil feeling; on the contrary, they seemed as though they would rather do us honor. As we marched by the great tent of General Gates, he invited in the brigadiers and commanders of regiments, and various refreshments were set before them. Gates is between fifty and sixty years of age; wears his own thin gray hair; is active and friendly, and on account of the weakness of his eyes, constantly

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<sup>1</sup> Briefe aus Neu England. Schlüzer's Briefwechsel.

wears spectacles. At head-quarters we met many officers, who treated us with all possible politeness."

We now give another page of the Baroness De Riedesel's fortunes, at this time of the surrender. "My husband's groom brought me a message to join him with the children. I once more seated myself in my dear calash, and, while riding through the American camp was gratified to observe that nobody looked at us with disrespect, but, on the contrary, greeted us, and seemed touched at the sight of a captive mother with her children. I must candidly confess that I did not present myself, though so situated, with much courage to the enemy, for the thing was entirely new to me. When I drew near the tents, a good-looking man advanced towards me, and helping the children from the calash, kissed and caressed them: he then offered me his arm, and tears trembled in his eyes. 'You tremble,' said he; 'do not be alarmed I pray you.' 'Sir,' cried I, 'a countenance so expressive of benevolence, and the kindness you have evinced towards my children, are sufficient to dispel all apprehensions.' He then ushered me into the tent of General Gates, whom I found engaged in friendly conversation with Generals Burgoyne and Phillips. General Burgoyne said to me, 'You can now be quiet, and free from all apprehension of danger.' I replied that I should indeed be reprehensible, if I felt any anxiety, when our general felt none, and was on such friendly terms with General Gates.

"All the generals remained to dine with General Gates. The gentleman who had received me with so much kindness, came and said to me, 'You may find it embarrassing to be the only lady in such a large company of gentlemen; will you come with your children to my tent, and partake of a frugal dinner, offered with the best will?' 'By the kindness you show to me,' returned I, 'you induce me to believe that you have a wife and children.' He informed me that he was General Schuyler. He regaled me with smoked tongues, which were excellent, with beefsteaks, potatoes, fresh butter and bread. Never did a dinner give me more pleasure than this, and I read the same happy change on the countenances of all those around me. That my husband was out of danger, was a still greater joy. After dinner, General Schuyler begged me to pay him a visit at his house at Albany, where he expected that General Burgoyne would also be his guest. I sent to ask my husband's directions, who advised me to accept the invitation." The reception which she met with at Albany, from General Schuyler's

wife and daughters, was not, she said, like the reception of enemies, but of the most intimate friends. "They loaded us with kindness," writes she, "and they behaved in the same manner towards General Burgoyne, though he had ordered their splendid establishment to be burnt, and without any necessity, it was said. But all their actions proved, that in the sight of the misfortunes of others they quickly forgot their own." It was, in fact, the lot of Burgoyne to have coals of fire heaped on his head by those with whom he had been at enmity. One of the first persons whom he had encountered in the American camp was General Schuyler. He attempted to make some explanation or excuse about the recent destruction of his property. Schuyler begged him not to think of it, as the occasion justified it, according to the principles and rules of war.

"He did more," said Burgoyne, in a speech before the House of Commons: "he sent an aide-de-camp to conduct me to Albany; in order, as he expressed it, to procure better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. That gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and, to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Schuyler and her family. In that house I remained during my whole stay in Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other demonstration of hospitality."

This was indeed realizing the vaunted courtesy and magnanimity of the age of chivalry.

The surrender of Burgoyne was soon followed by the evacuation of Ticonderoga and Fort Independence, the garrisons retiring to the Isle aux Noix and St. John's. As to the armament on the Hudson, the commanders whom Sir Henry Clinton had left in charge of it, received, in the midst of their desolating career, the astounding intelligence of the capture of the army with which they had come to co-operate. Nothing remained for them, therefore, but to drop down the river and return to New York.

The whole expedition, though it had effected much damage to the Americans, failed to be of essential service to the royal cause. The fortresses in the Highlands could not be maintained, and had been evacuated and destroyed, and the plundering and burning of defenceless towns and villages, and especially the conflagration of Esopus, had given to the whole enterprise the character of a maraud, disgraceful in civilized warfare, and calculated only to inflame more deadly enmity and determined opposition.

**NOTE.** — The reader may desire to know the sequel of Lady Harriet Ackland's romantic story. Her husband recovered from his wounds, and they returned together to England. Major Ackland retained a grateful sense of the kind treatment they had experienced from the Americans. At a dinner party he had warm words with another British officer, who questioned the American character for courage. A duel ensued, in which the major was killed. The shock to Lady Harriet produced mental derangement. She recovered in the course of a couple of years, and ultimately was married to Mr. Brudenell, the worthy chaplain who had been her companion and protector in the time of her distress.

### CHAPTER III.

**WASHINGTON ADVANCES TO SKIPPACK CREEK — THE BRITISH FLEET  
IN THE DELAWARE — FORTS AND OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE RIVER —  
WASHINGTON MEDITATES AN ATTACK ON THE BRITISH CAMP —  
BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN.**

HAVING given the catastrophe of the British invasion from the North, we will revert to that part of the year's campaign which was passing under the immediate eye of Washington. We left him encamped at Pott's Grove towards the end of September, giving his troops a few days' repose after their severe fatigues. Being rejoined by Wayne and Smallwood with their brigades, and other troops being arrived from the Jerseys, his force amounted to about eight thousand Continentals and three thousand militia; with these he advanced, on the 30th of September, to Skippack Creek, about fourteen miles from Germantown, where the main body of the British army lay encamped; a detachment under Cornwallis occupying Philadelphia.

Immediately after the battle of Brandywine, Admiral Lord Howe with great exertions had succeeded in getting his ships-of-war and transports round from the Chesapeake into the Delaware and had anchored them along the western shore from Reedy Island to Newcastle. They were prevented from approaching nearer by obstructions which the Americans had placed in the river. The lowest of these were at Billingsport (or Bylling's Point), where chevaux-de-frise in the channel of the river were protected by a strong redoubt on the Jersey shore. Higher up were Fort Mifflin on Mud (or Fort) Island, and Fort Mercer on the Jersey shore; with chevaux-de-frise between them. Washington had exerted himself to throw a garrison into Fort Mifflin, and keep up the obstructions of the river "If these can be maintained," he said, "General

Howe's situation will not be the most agreeable ; for if his supplies can be stopped by water, it may easily be done by land. To do both shall be my utmost endeavor ; and I am not without hope that the acquisition of Philadelphia may, instead of his good fortune, prove his ruin."<sup>1</sup>

Sir William Howe was perfectly aware of this, and had concerted operations with his brother by land and water, to reduce the forts and clear away the obstructions of the river. With this view he detached a part of his force into the Jerseys, to proceed, in the first instance, against the fortifications at Billingsport.

Washington had been for some days anxiously on the lookout for some opportunity to strike a blow of consequence, when two intercepted letters gave him intelligence of this movement. He immediately determined to make an attack upon the British camp at Germantown, while weakened by the absence of this detachment. To understand the plan of the attack, some description of the British place of encampment is necessary.

Germantown, at that time, was little more than one continued street, extending two miles north and south. The houses were mostly of stone, low and substantial, with steep roofs and protecting eaves. They stood apart from each other, with fruit trees in front and small gardens. Beyond the village, and about a hundred yards east of the road, stood a spacious stone edifice, with ornamented grounds, statues, groves and shrubbery, the country-seat of Benjamin Chew, chief justice of Pennsylvania, previous to the Revolution : we shall have more to say concerning this mansion presently.

Four roads approached the village from above ; that is, from the north. The Skippack, which was the main road, led over Chestnut Hill and Mount Airy down to and through the village towards Philadelphia, forming the street of which we have just spoken. On its right, and nearly parallel, was the Monatawny or Ridge road, passing near the Schuylkill, and entering the main road below the village.

On the left of the Skippack or main road, was the Limekiln road, running nearly parallel to it for a time, and then turning towards it, almost at right angles, so as to enter the village at the market-place. Still further to the left or east, and outside of all, was the Old York road, falling into the main road some distance below the village.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to the President of Cong. Sparks, v. 71.

The main body of the British forces lay encamped across the lower part of the village, divided into almost equal parts by the main street or Skippack road. The right wing, commanded by General Grant, was to the east of the road, the left wing to the west. Each wing was covered by strong detachments, and guarded by cavalry. General Howe had his headquarters in the rear.

The advance of the army, composed of the 2d battalion of British light infantry, with a train of artillery, was more than two miles from the main body, on the west of the road, with an outlying picket stationed with two six-pounders at Allen's house on Mount Airy. About three-quarters of a mile in the rear of the light infantry, lay encamped in a field opposite "Chew's House," the 40th regiment of infantry, under Colonel Musgrave.

According to Washington's plan for the attack, Sullivan was to command the right wing, composed of his own division, principally Maryland troops, and the division of General Wayne. He was to be sustained by a *corps de reserve*, under Lord Stirling, composed of Nash's North Carolina and Maxwell's Virginia brigades, and to be flanked by the brigade of General Conway. He was to march down the Skippack road and attack the left wing; at the same time General Armstrong, with the Pennsylvania militia, was to pass down the Monatawny or Ridge road, and get upon the enemy's left and rear.

Greene with the left wing, composed of his own division and the division of General Stephen, and flanked by McDougall's brigade, was to march down the Limekiln road, so as to enter the village at the market-house. The two divisions were to attack the enemy's right wing in front, McDougall with his brigade to attack it in flank, while Smallwood's division of Maryland militia and Forman's Jersey brigade, making a circuit by the Old York road, were to attack it in the rear. Two-thirds of the forces were thus directed against the enemy's right wing, under the idea that, if it could be forced, the whole army must be pushed into the Schuylkill, or compelled to surrender. The attack was to begin on all quarters at daybreak.<sup>1</sup>

About dusk, on the 3d of October, the army left its encampment at Matuchen Hills, by its different routes. Washington accompanied the right wing. It had fifteen miles of weary

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Washington to the President of Congress. Letter of Sullivan to the President of New Hampshire.

march to make over rough roads, so that it was after day-break when the troops emerged from the woods on Chestnut Hill. The morning was dark with a heavy fog. A detachment advanced to attack the enemy's out-picket, stationed at Allen's House. The patrol was led by Captain Allen McLane, a brave Maryland officer, well acquainted with the ground, and with the position of the enemy. He fell in with double sentries, whom he killed with the loss of one man. The alarm, however, was given; the distant roll of a drum and the call to arms, resounded through the murky air. The picket guard, after discharging their two six-pounders, were routed, and retreated down the south side of Mount Airy to the battalion of light infantry who were forming in order of battle. As their pursuers descended into the valley, the sun rose, but was soon obscured. Wayne led the attack upon the light infantry. "They broke at first," writes he, "without waiting to receive us, but soon formed again, when a heavy and well-directed fire took place on both sides."

They again gave way, but being supported by the grenadiers, returned to the charge. Sullivan's division and Conway's brigade formed on the west of the road, and joined in the attack; the rest of the troops were too far to the north to render any assistance. The infantry, after fighting bravely for a time, broke and ran, leaving their artillery behind. They were hotly pursued by Wayne. His troops remembered the bloody 20th of September, and the ruthless slaughter of their comrades. "They pushed on with the bayonet," says Wayne, "and took ample vengeance for that night's work." The officers endeavored to restrain their fury towards those who cried for mercy, but to little purpose. It was a terrible *melée*. The fog, together with the smoke of the cannonry and musketry, made it almost as dark as night: our people mistaking one another for the enemy, frequently exchanged shots before they discovered their error. The whole of the enemy's advance were driven from their camping ground, leaving their tents standing, with all their baggage. Colonel Musgrave, with six companies of the 40th regiment, threw himself into Chew's House, barricaded the doors and lower windows, and took post above stairs; the main torrent of the retreat passed by pursued by Wayne into the village.

As the residue of this division of the army came up to join in the pursuit, Musgrave and his men opened a fire of musketry upon them from the upper windows of his citadel. This brought them to a halt. Some of the officers were for pushing on; but

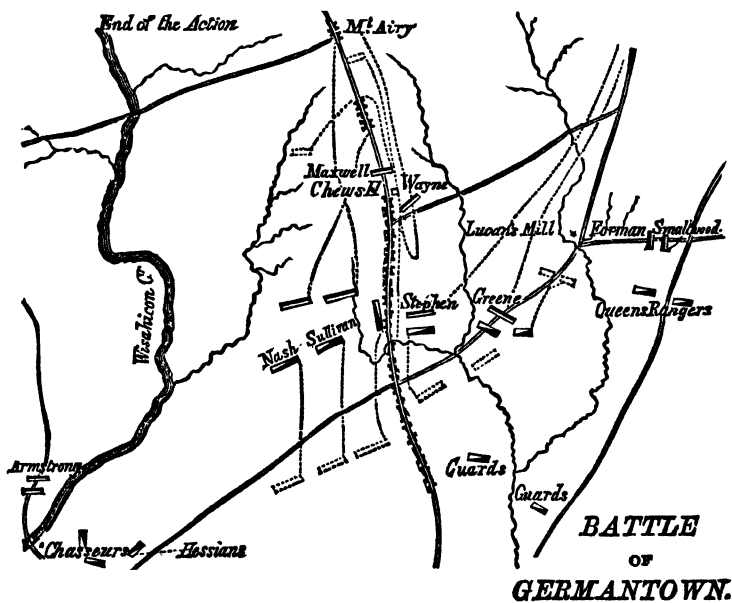
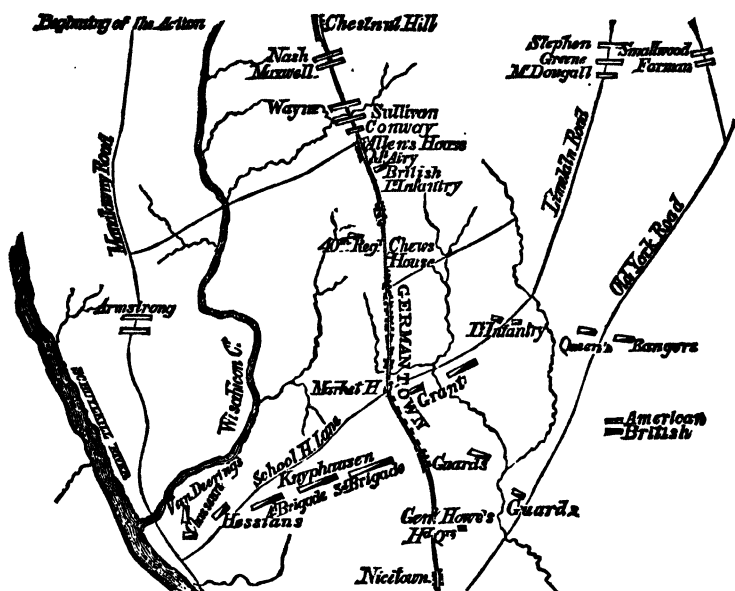
General Knox stoutly objected, insisting on the old military maxim, never to leave a garrisoned castle in the rear.

His objection unluckily prevailed. A flag was sent with a summons to surrender. A young Virginian, Lieutenant Smith, volunteered to be the bearer. As he was advancing, he was fired upon and received a mortal wound. The house was now cannonaded, but the artillery was too light to have the desired effect. An attempt was made to set fire to the basement. He who attempted it was shot dead from a grated cellar window. Half an hour was thus spent in vain; scarce any of the defenders of the house were injured, though many of the assailants were slain. At length a regiment was left to keep guard upon the mansion and hold its garrison in check, and the rear division again pressed forward.

This half hour's delay, however, of nearly one-half of the army, disconcerted the action. The divisions and brigades thus separated from each other by the skirmishing attack upon Chew's House, could not be reunited. The fog and smoke rendered all objects indistinct at thirty yards' distance; the different parts of the army knew nothing of the position or movements of each other, and the commander-in-chief could take no view nor gain any information of the situation of the whole. The original plan of attack was only effectively carried into operation in the centre. The flanks and rear of the enemy were nearly unmolested; still the action, though disconnected, irregular and partial, was animated in various quarters. Sullivan, being re-enforced by Nash's North Carolina troops and Conway's brigade, pushed on a mile beyond Chew's House, where the left wing of the enemy gave way before him.

Greene and Stephen, with their divisions, having had to make a circuit, were late in coming into action, and became separated from each other, part of Stephen's division being arrested by a heavy fire from Chew's House and pausing to return it: Greene, however, with his division, comprising the brigades of Muhlenberg and Scott, pressed rapidly forward, drove an advance regiment of light infantry before him, took a number of prisoners, and made his way quite to the market-house in the centre of the village, where he encountered the right wing of the British, drawn up to receive him. The impetuosity of his attack had an evident effect upon the enemy, who began to waver. Forman and Smallwood, with the Jersey and Maryland militia, were just showing themselves on the right flank of the enemy, and our troops seemed on the point of carrying the whole encampment. At this moment a singular panic seized our army.







Various causes are assigned for it. Sullivan alleges that his troops had expended all their cartridges, and were alarmed by seeing the enemy gathering on their left, and by the cry of a light-horseman, that the enemy were getting round them. Wayne's division, which had pushed the enemy nearly three miles, was alarmed by the approach of a large body of American troops on its left flank, which it mistook for foes, and fell back in defiance of every effort of its officers to rally it. In its retreat it came upon Stephen's division and threw it into a panic, being, in its turn, mistaken for the enemy; thus all fell into confusion, and our army fled from their own victory.

In the mean time, the enemy, having recovered from the first effects of surprise, advanced in their turn. General Grey brought up the left wing, and pressed upon the American troops as they receded. Lord Cornwallis, with a squadron of light horse from Philadelphia, arrived just in time to join in the pursuit.

The retreat of the Americans was attended with less loss than might be expected, and they carried off all their cannon and wounded. This was partly owing to the good generalship of Greene, in keeping up a retreating fight with the enemy for nearly five miles; and partly to a check given by Wayne, who turned his cannon upon the enemy from an eminence, near White Marsh Church, and brought them to a stand. The retreat continued through the day to Perkiomen Creek, a distance of twenty miles.

The loss of the enemy in this action is stated by them to be seventy-one killed, four hundred and fifteen wounded, and fourteen missing: among the killed was Brigadier-General Agnew. The American loss was one hundred and fifty killed, five hundred and twenty-one wounded, and about four hundred taken prisoners. Among the killed was General Nash of North Carolina. Among the prisoners was Colonel Mathews of Virginia, who commanded a Virginia regiment in the left wing. Most of his officers and men were killed or wounded in fighting bravely near the market-house, and he himself received several bayonet wounds.

Speaking of Washington's conduct amidst the perplexities of this confused battle, General Sullivan writes, "I saw with great concern, our brave commander-in-chief exposing himself to the hottest fire of the enemy, in such a manner, that regard for my country obliged me to ride to him, and beg him to retire. He, to gratify me and some others, withdrew to a small distance, but his anxiety for the fate of the day soon brought him up again, where he remained till our troops had retreated."

The sudden retreat of the army gave him surprise, chagrin and mortification. "Every account," said he subsequently, in a letter to the President of Congress, "confirms the opinion I at first entertained, that our troops retreated at the instant when victory was declaring herself in our favor. The tumult, disorder, and even despair, which, it seems, had taken place in the British army, were scarcely to be paralleled; and it is said, so strongly did the ideas of a retreat prevail, that Chester was fixed on for their rendezvous. I can discover no other cause for not improving this happy opportunity, than the extreme haziness of the weather."

So also Captain Heth of Virginia, who was in the action: "What makes this inglorious flight more grating to us is, that we know the enemy had orders to retreat, and rendezvous at Chester; and that upwards of two thousand Hessians had actually crossed the Schuylkill for that purpose; that the tories were in the utmost distress, and moving out of the city; that our friends confined in the new jail made it ring with shouts of joy; that we passed, in pursuing them, upwards of twenty pieces of cannon, their tents standing filled with their choicest baggage; in fine, every thing was as we could wish, when the above flight took place."

No one was more annoyed than Wayne. "Fortune smiled on us for full three hours," writes he; "the enemy were broke, dispersed, and flying in all quarters — we were in possession of their whole encampment, together with their artillery, park, etc., etc. A *wind-mill* attack was made upon a house into which six light companies had thrown themselves, to avoid our bayonets. Our troops were deceived by this attack, thinking it something formidable. They fell back to assist, — the enemy believing it to be a retreat, followed, — confusion ensued, and we ran away from the arms of victory open to receive us."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, as has justly been observed by an experienced officer, the plan of attack was too widely extended for strict concert, and too complicated for precise co-operation, as it had to be conducted in the night, and with a large proportion of undisciplined militia; and yet, a bewildering fog alone appears to have prevented its complete success.

But although the Americans were balked of the victory, which seemed within their grasp, the impression made by the audacity of this attempt upon Germantown, was greater, we are told,

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Colonel Lamb in the Lamb Papers, N.Y. Hist. Soc., and quoted in the *Life of Lamb*, p. 126.

than that caused by any single incident of the war after Lexington and Bunker's Hill.<sup>1</sup>

A British military historian, a contemporary, observes: "In this action the Americans acted upon the offensive; and though repulsed with loss, showed themselves a formidable adversary, capable of charging with resolution and retreating with good order. The hope, therefore, entertained from the effect of any action with them as decisive, and likely to put a speedy termination to the war, was exceedingly abated."<sup>2</sup>

The battle had its effect also in France. The Count De Vergennes observed to the American commissioners in Paris on their first interview, that nothing struck him so much as General Washington's attacking and giving battle to General Howe's army; that to bring an army raised within a year to this pass promised every thing.

The effect on the army itself may be judged from letters written at the time by officers to their friends. "Though we gave away a complete victory," writes one, "we have learnt this valuable truth, that we are able to beat them by vigorous exertion, and that we are far superior in point of swiftness. We are in high spirits; every action gives our troops fresh vigor, and a greater opinion of their own strength. Another bout or two must make the situation of the enemy very disagreeable."<sup>3</sup>

Another writes to his father: "For my own part, I am so fully convinced of the justice of the cause in which we are contending, and that Providence, in its own good time, will succeed and bless it, that, were I to see twelve of the United States overrun by our cruel invaders, I should still believe the thirteenth would not only save itself, but also work out the deliverance of the others."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reed's Memoirs, vol. 1., p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> Civil War in America, I., 289.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Heth to Colonel Lamb.

<sup>4</sup> Major Shaw. Memoirs, by Josiah Quincy, p. 41.

## CHAPTER IV.

WASHINGTON AT WHITE MARSH — MEASURES TO CUT OFF THE ENEMY'S SUPPLIES — THE FORTS ON THE DELAWARE RE-ENFORCED — COLONEL GREENE OF RHODE ISLAND AT FORT MERCER — ATTACK AND DEFENCE OF THAT FORT — DEATH OF COUNT DONOP.

WASHINGTON remained a few days at Perkiomen Creek, to give his army time to rest, and recover from the disorder incident to a retreat. Having been re-enforced by the arrival of twelve hundred Rhode Island troops from Peekskill, under General Varnum, and nearly a thousand Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania troops, he gradually drew nearer to Philadelphia, and took a strong position at White Marsh, within fourteen miles of that city. By a resolution of Congress all persons taken within thirty miles of any place occupied by British troops, in the act of conveying supplies to them, were subjected to martial law. Acting under the resolution, Washington detached large bodies of militia to scour the roads above the city, and between the Schuylkill and Chester, to intercept all supplies going to the enemy.

On the forts and obstructions in the river, Washington mainly counted to complete the harassment of Philadelphia. These defences had been materially impaired. The works at Billingsport had been attacked and destroyed, and some of the enemy's ships had forced their way through the chevaux-de-frise placed there. The American frigate Delaware, stationed in the river between the upper forts and Philadelphia, had run aground before a British battery, and been captured.

It was now the great object of the Howes to reduce and destroy, and of Washington to defend and maintain, the remaining forts and obstructions. Fort Mifflin, which we have already mentioned, was erected on a low, green, reedy island in the Delaware, a few miles below Philadelphia and below the mouth of the Schuylkill. It consisted of a strong redoubt, with extensive outworks and batteries. There was but a narrow channel between the island and the Pennsylvania shore. The main channel, practicable for ships, was on the other side. In this were sunk strong chevaux-de-frise, difficult either to be weighed or cut through, and dangerous to any ships that might run against them; subjected as they would be to the batteries

of Fort Mifflin on one side, and on the other to those of Fort Mercer, a strong work at Red Bank on the Jersey shore.

Fort Mifflin was garrisoned by troops of the Maryland line, under Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Smith of Baltimore; and had kept up a brave defence against batteries erected by the enemy on the Pennsylvania shore. A re-enforcement of Virginia troops made the garrison between three and four hundred strong.

Floating batteries, galleys, and fire-ships, commanded by Commodore Hazelwood, were stationed under the forts and about the river.

Fort Mercer had hitherto been garrisoned by militia, but Washington now replaced them by four hundred of General Varnum's Rhode Island Continentals. Colonel Christopher Greene was put in command; a brave officer who had accompanied Arnold in his rough expedition to Canada, and fought valiantly under the walls of Quebec. "The post with which you are intrusted," writes Washington in his letter of instructions, "is of the utmost importance to America. The whole defence of the Delaware depends upon it; and consequently all the enemy's hopes of keeping Philadelphia, and finally succeeding in the present campaign."

Colonel Greene was accompanied by Captain Mauduit Duplessis, who was to have the direction of the artillery. He was a young French engineer of great merit, who had volunteered in the American cause, and received a commission from Congress. The chevaux-de-frise in the river had been constructed under his superintendence.

Greene, aided by Duplessis, made all haste to put Fort Mercer in a state of defence; but before the outworks were completed, he was surprised (October 22) by the appearance of a large force emerging from a wood within cannon shot of the fort. Their uniforms showed them to be Hessians. They were, in fact, four battalions, twelve hundred strong, of grenadiers, picked men, beside light infantry and chasseurs, all commanded by Count Donop, who had figured in the last year's campaign.

Colonel Greene, in nowise dismayed by the superiority of the enemy, forming in glistening array before the wood, prepared for a stout resistance. In a little while an officer was despatched, riding slowly up with a flag, accompanied by a drummer. Greene ordered his men to keep out of sight, that the fort might appear but slightly garrisoned.

When within proper distance, the drummer sounded a parley, and the officer summoned the garrison to surrender; with a threat of no quarter in case of resistance.

Greene's reply was, that the post would be defended to the last extremity.

The flag rode back and made report. Forthwith the Hessians were seen at work throwing up a battery within half a mile of the outworks. It was finished by four o'clock, and opened a heavy cannonade, under cover of which the enemy were preparing to approach.

As the American outworks were but half finished, and were too extensive to be manned by the garrison, it was determined by Greene and Duplessis that the troops should make but a short stand there, to gull the enemy in their approach, and then retire within the redoubt, which was defended by a deep intrenchment, boarded and fraised.

Donop led on his troops in gallant style, under cover of a heavy fire from his battery. They advanced in two columns, to attack the outworks in two places. As they advanced, they were excessively galled by a flanking fire from the American galleys and batteries, and by sharp volleys from the outworks. The latter, however, as had been concerted, were quickly abandoned by the garrison. The enemy entered at two places, and imagining the day their own, the two columns pushed on with shouts to storm different parts of the redoubt. As yet, no troops were to be seen; but as one of the columns approached the redoubt on the north side, a tremendous discharge of grape-shot and musketry burst forth from the embrasures in front, and a half-masked battery on the left. The slaughter was prodigious; the column was driven back in confusion. Count Donop, with the other column, in attempting the south side of the redoubt, had passed the abatis; some of his men had traversed the fosse; others had clambered over the pickets, when a similar tempest of artillery and musketry burst upon them. Some were killed on the spot, many were wounded, and the rest were driven out. Donop himself was wounded, and remained on the spot; Lieutenant-Colonel Mingerode, the second in command, was also dangerously wounded. Several other of the best officers were slain or disabled. Lieutenant-Colonel Linsing, the oldest remaining officer, endeavored to draw off the troops in good order, but in vain; they retreated in confusion, hotly pursued, and were again cut up in their retreat by the flanking fire from the galleys and floating batteries.

The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded, in this brief but severe action, was about four hundred men. That of the Americans, eight killed and twenty-nine wounded.

As Captain Mauduit Duplessis was traversing the scene of



slaughter after the repulse, he was accosted by a voice from among the slain: "Whoever you are, draw me hence." It was the unfortunate Count Donop. Duplessis had him conveyed to a house near the fort, where every attention was paid to his comfort. He languished for three days, during which Duplessis was continually at his bedside. "This is finishing a noble career early," said the count sadly, as he found his death approaching, — then, as if conscious of the degrading service in which he had fallen, hired out by his prince to aid a foreign power in quelling the brave struggle of a people for their liberty, and contrasting it with that in which the chivalrous youth by his bedside was engaged — "I die," added he bitterly, "the victim of my ambition, and of the avarice of my sovereign."<sup>1</sup> He was but thirty-seven years of age at the time of his death.

According to the plan of the enemy, Fort Mifflin, opposite to Fort Mercer, was to have been attacked at the same time by water. The force employed was the *Augusta* of sixty-four guns; the *Roebuck* of forty-four, two frigates, the *Merlin* sloop of eighteen guns, and a galley. They forced their way through the lower line of *chevaux-de-frise*; but the *Augusta* and *Merlin* ran aground below the second line, and every effort to get them off proved fruitless. To divert attention from their situation, the other vessels drew as near to Fort Mifflin as they could, and opened a cannonade: but the obstructions in the river had so altered the channel that they could not get within very effective distance. They kept up a fire upon the fort throughout the evening, and recommenced it early in the morning, as did likewise the British batteries on the Pennsylvania shore; hoping that under cover of it the ships might be got off. A strong adverse wind, however, kept the tide from rising sufficiently to float them.

The Americans discovered their situation, and sent down four fire-ships to destroy them, but without effect. A heavy fire was now opened upon them from the galleys and floating batteries. It was warmly returned. In the course of the action, a red-hot shot set the *Augusta* on fire. It was impossible to check the flames. All haste was made with boats to save the crew, while the other ships drew off as fast as possible to get out of the reach of the explosion. She blew up, however, while the second lieutenant, the chaplain, the gunner, and several of the crew were yet on board, most of whom perished. The *Merlin* was now set on fire and abandoned; the *Roebuck* and

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<sup>1</sup> De Chastellux, vol. i. p. 266.

the other vessels dropped down the river, and the attack on Fort Mifflin was given up.

These signal repulses of the enemy had an animating effect on the public mind, and were promptly noticed by Congress. Colonel Greene, who commanded at Fort Mercer, Lieutenant-Colonel Smith of Maryland, who commanded at Fort Mifflin, and Commodore Hazelwood, who commanded the galleys, received the thanks of that body; and, subsequently, a sword was voted to each, as a testimonial of distinguished merit.

## CHAPTER V.

DE KALB COMMISSIONED MAJOR-GENERAL — PRETENSIONS OF CONWAY — THWARTED BY WASHINGTON — CONWAY CABAL — GATES REMISS IN CORRESPONDENCE — DILATORY IN FORWARDING TROOPS — MISSION OF HAMILTON TO GATES — WILKINSON BEARER OF DESPATCHES TO CONGRESS — A TARDY TRAVELER — HIS REWARD — CONWAY CORRESPONDENCE DETECTED — WASHINGTON'S APOLOGY FOR HIS ARMY.

WE have heretofore had occasion to advert to the annoyances and perplexities occasioned to Washington by the claims and pretensions of foreign officers who had entered into the service. Among the officers who came out with Lafayette, was the Baron De Kalb, a German by birth, but who had long been employed in the French service, and though a silver-haired veteran, sixty years of age, was yet fresh and active and vigorous; which some attributed to his being a rigid water drinker. In the month of September, Congress had given him the commission of major-general, to date with that of Lafayette.

This instantly produced a remonstrance from Brigadier-General Conway, the Gallic Hibernian, of whom we have occasionally made mention, who considered himself slighted and forgot, in their giving a superior rank to his own to a person who had not rendered the cause the least service, and who had been his inferior in France. He claimed, therefore, for himself, the rank of major-general, and was supported in his pretensions by persons both in and out of Congress; especially by Mifflin, the quartermaster-general.

Washington had already been disgusted by the overweening presumption of Conway, and was surprised to hear that his application was likely to be successful. He wrote on the 17th of

October, to Richard Henry Lee, then in Congress, warning him that such an appointment would be as unfortunate a measure as ever was adopted — one that would give a fatal blow to the existence of the army. "Upon so interesting a subject," observes he, "I must speak plainly. The duty I owe my country, the ardent desire I have to promote its true interest, and justice to individuals, require this of me. General Conway's merits as an officer, and his importance in this army, exist more in his own imagination than in reality. For it is a maxim with him to leave no service of his own untold, nor to want any thing which is to be obtained by importunity. . . . I would ask why the youngest brigadier in the service should be put over the heads of the oldest, and thereby take rank and command of gentlemen who but yesterday were his seniors; gentlemen who, as I will be bound to say in behalf of some of them at least, are of sound judgment and unquestionable bravery. . . . This truth I am well assured of, that they will not serve under him. I leave you to guess, therefore, at the situation this army would be in at so important a crisis, if this event should take place."

This opposition to his presumptuous aspirations, at once threw Conway into a faction forming under the auspices of General Mifflin. This gentleman had recently tendered his resignation of the commission of major-general and quartermaster-general on the plea of ill health, but was busily engaged in intrigues against the commander-in-chief, towards whom he had long cherished a secret hostility. Conway now joined with him heart and hand, and soon became so active and prominent a member of the faction that it acquired the name of *Conway's Cabal*. The object was to depreciate the military character of Washington, in comparison with that of Gates, to whom was attributed the whole success of the Northern campaign. Gates was perfectly ready for such an elevation. He was intoxicated by his good fortune, and seemed to forget that he had reaped where he had not sown, and that the defeat of Burgoyne had been insured by plans concerted and put in operation before his arrival in the Northern Department.

In fact, in the excitement of his vanity, Gates appears to have forgotten that there was a commander-in-chief, to whom he was accountable. He neglected to send him any despatch on the subject of the surrender of Burgoyne, contenting himself with sending one to Congress, then sitting at Yorktown. Washington was left to hear of the important event by casual rumor, and was for several days in anxious uncertainty, until he received a copy of the capitulation in a letter from General Putnam.

Gates was equally neglectful to inform him of the disposition he intended to make of the army under his command. He delayed even to forward Morgan's rifle corps, though their services were no longer needed in his camp, and were so much required in the South. It was determined, therefore, in a council of war, that one of Washington's staff should be sent to Gates to represent the critical state of affairs, and that a large re-enforcement from the Northern army would, in all probability, reduce General Howe to the same situation with Burgoyne, should he remain in Philadelphia, without being able to remove the obstructions in the Delaware, and open a free communication with his shipping.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton, his youthful but intelligent aide-de-camp, was charged with this mission. He bore a letter from Washington to Gates, dated October 30, of which the following is an extract.

"By this opportunity, I do myself the pleasure to congratulate you on the signal success of the army under your command, in compelling General Burgoyne and his whole force to surrender themselves prisoners of war; an event that does the highest honor to the American armies, and which, I hope, will be attended with the most extensive and happy consequences. At the same time, I cannot but regret that a matter of such magnitude, and so interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only; or through the channel of letters not bearing that authenticity which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature stating the simple fact."

Such was the calm and dignified notice of an instance of official disrespect, almost amounting to insubordination. It is doubtful whether Gates, in his state of mental effervescence, felt the noble severity of the rebuke.

The officer whom Gates had employed as bearer of his despatch to Congress, was Wilkinson, his adjutant-general and devoted sycophant: a man at once pompous and servile. He was so long on the road that the articles of the treaty, according to his own account, reached the grand army before he did the Congress. Even after his arrival at Yorktown he required three days to arrange his papers, preparing to deliver them in style. At length, eighteen days after the surrender of Burgoyne had taken place, he formally laid the documents concerning it before Congress, preluding them with a message in the name of Gates, but prepared the day before by himself, and following them up by comments, explanatory and eulogistic, of his own.

He evidently expected to produce a great effect by this rhetorical display, and to be signally rewarded for his good tidings, but Congress were as slow in expressing their sense of his services, as he had been in rendering them. He swelled and chafed under this neglect, but affected to despise it. In a letter to his patron, Gates, he observes: "I have not been honored with any mark of distinction from Congress. Indeed, should I receive no testimony of their approbation of my conduct, I shall not be mortified. My hearty contempt of the world will shield me from such pitiful sensations."<sup>1</sup>

A proposal was at length made in Congress that a sword should be voted to him as the bearer of such auspicious tidings: upon which Dr. Witherspoon, a shrewd Scot, exclaimed, "I think ye'll better gie the lad a pair of spurs."<sup>2</sup>

A few days put an end to Wilkinson's suspense, and probably reconciled him to the world; he was breveted a brigadier-general.

A fortuitous circumstance, which we shall explain hereafter, apprised Washington about this time that a correspondence, derogatory to his military character and conduct, was going on between General Conway and General Gates. It was a parallel case with Lee's correspondence of the preceding year; and Washington conducted himself in it with the same dignified forbearance, contenting himself with letting Conway know, by the following brief note, dated November 9, that his correspondence was detected.

"SIR—A letter which I received last night contained the following paragraph—'in a letter from General Conway to General Gates, he says, "*Heaven has determined to save your country, or a weak general and bad counsellors would have ruined it.*"'

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

The brevity of this note rendered it the more astounding. It was a hand-grenade thrown into the midst of the cabal. The effect upon other members we shall show hereafter: it seems, at first, to have prostrated Conway. An epistle of his friend Mifflin to Gates, intimates that Conway endeavored to palliate to Washington the censorious expressions in his letter, by pleading the careless freedom of language indulged in famil-

<sup>1</sup> Gates's Papers, N. Y. Hist. Lib.

<sup>2</sup> Life of Lord Stirling, by W. A. Duer, p. 182.

lar letter writing; no other record of such explanation remains, and that probably was not received as satisfactory. Certain it is, he immediately sent in his resignation. To some he alleged, as an excuse for resigning, the disparaging way in which he had been spoken of by some members of Congress; to others he observed, that the campaign was at an end, and there was a prospect of a French war. The real reason he kept to himself, and Washington suffered it to remain a secret. His resignation, however, was not accepted by Congress; on the contrary, he was supported by the cabal, and was advanced to further honors which we shall specify hereafter.

In the mean time, the cabal went on to make invidious comparisons between the achievements of the two armies, deeply derogatory to that under Washington. Publicly, he took no notice of them; but they drew from him the following apology for his army, in a noble and characteristic letter to his friend, the celebrated Patrick Henry, then governor of Virginia. "The design of this," writes he, "is only to inform you, and with great truth I can do it, strange as it may seem, that the army which I have had under my immediate command, has not, at any one time, since General Howe's landing at the Head of Elk, been equal in point of numbers to his. In ascertaining this, I do not confine myself to Continental troops, but comprehend militia. The disaffected and lukewarm in this State, in whom unhappily it too much abounds, taking advantage of the distraction in the government, prevented those vigorous exertions, which an invaded State ought to have yielded. . . . I was left to fight two battles, in order, if possible, to save Philadelphia, with less numbers than composed the army of my antagonist, whilst the world has given us at least double. This impression, though mortifying in some points of view, I have been obliged to encourage; because, next to being strong, it is best to be thought so by the enemy; and to this cause, principally, I think is to be attributed the slow movements of General Howe.

"How different the case in the Northern Department! There the States of New York and New England, resolving to crush Burgoyne, continued pouring in their troops, till the surrender of that army; at which time not less than fourteen thousand militia, as I have been informed, were actually in General Gates' camp, and those composed, for the most part, of the best yeomanry in the country, well armed, and in many instances supplied with provisions of their own carrying. Had the same spirit pervaded the people of this and the neighboring

States, we might before this time have had General Howe nearly in the situation of General Burgoyne. . . .

"My own difficulties, in the course of the campaign, have been not a little increased by the extra aid of Continental troops, which the gloomy prospect of our affairs in the North immediately after the reduction of Ticonderoga, induced me to spare from this army. But it is to be hoped that all will yet end well. IF THE CAUSE IS ADVANCED, INDIFFERENT IS IT TO ME WHERE OR IN WHAT QUARTER IT HAPPENS."

We have put the last sentence in capitals, for it speaks the whole soul of Washington. Glory with him is a secondary consideration. Let those who win, wear the laurel — sufficient for him is the advancement of the cause.

NOTE. — We subjoin an earnest appeal of Washington to Thomas Wharton, President of Pennsylvania, on the 17th of October, urging him to keep up the quota of troops demanded of the State by Congress, and to furnish additional aid. "I assure you, sir," writes he, "It is a matter of astonishment to every part of the continent to hear that Pennsylvania, the most opulent and populous of all the States, has but twelve hundred militia in the field, at a time when the enemy are endeavoring to make themselves completely masters of, and to fix their quarters in, her capital." And Major-General Armstrong, commanding the Pennsylvania militia, writes at the same time to the Council of his State:—"Be not deceived with wrong notions of General Washington's numbers; be assured he wants your aid. Let the brave step forth, their example will animate the many. You all speak well of our commander-in-chief at a distance; don't you want to see him, and pay him one generous, one martial visit, when kindly invited to his camp near the end of a long campaign? There you will see for yourselves the unremitting zeal and toils of all the day and half the night, multiplied into years, without seeing house or home of his own, without murmur or complaint; but believes and calls this arduous task the service of his country and of his God."

## CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER HOSTILITIES ON THE DELAWARE—FORT MIFFLIN  
ATTACKED—BRAVELY DEFENDED—REDUCED—MISSION OF  
HAMILTON AND GATES—VISITS THE CAMPS OF GOVERNOR  
CLINTON AND PUTNAM ON THE HUDSON—PUTNAM ON HIS  
HOBBY-HORSE—DIFFICULTIES IN PROCURING RE-ENFORCEMENTS  
—INTRIGUES OF THE CABAL—LETTER OF LOVELL AND MIF-  
FLIN TO GATES—THE WORKS AT RED BANK DESTROYED—  
THE ENEMY IN POSSESSION OF THE DELAWARE.

THE non-arrival of re-enforcements from the Northern army continued to embarrass Washington's operations. The enemy were making preparations for further attempts upon Forts

Mercer and Mifflin. General Howe was constructing redoubts and batteries on Province Island, on the west side of the Delaware, within five hundred yards of Fort Mifflin, and mounting them with heavy cannon. Washington consulted with his general officers what was to be done. Had the army received the expected re-enforcements from the North, it might have detached sufficient force to the west side of the Schuylkill to dislodge the enemy from Province Island; but at present it would require almost the whole of the army for the purpose. This would leave the public stores at Easton, Bethlehem and Allentown, uncovered, as well as several of the hospitals. It would also leave the post at Red Bank unsupported, through which Fort Mifflin was re-enforced and supplied. It was determined, therefore, to await the arrival of the expected re-enforcements from the North, before making any alteration in the disposition of the army. In the mean time, the garrisons of Forts Mercer and Mifflin were increased, and General Varnum was stationed at Red Bank with his brigade, to be at hand to render re-enforcements to either of them as occasion might require.

On the 10th of November, General Howe commenced a heavy fire upon Fort Mifflin from his batteries, which mounted eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty-two pounders. Colonel Smith doubted the competency of his feeble garrison to defend the works against a force so terribly effective, and wrote to Washington accordingly. The latter in reply represented the great importance of the works, and trusted they would be maintained to the last extremity. General Varnum was instructed to send over fresh troops occasionally to relieve those in the garrison, and to prevail upon as many as possible of the militia to go over. The latter could be employed at night upon the works to repair the damage sustained in the day, and might, if they desired it, return to Red Bank in the morning.

Washington's orders and instructions were faithfully obeyed. Major Fleury, a brave French officer, already mentioned, acquitted himself with intelligence and spirit as engineer; but an incessant cannonade and bombardment for several days, defied all repairs. The block-houses were demolished, the palisades beaten down, the guns dismounted, the barracks reduced to ruins. Captain Treat, a young officer of great merit, who commanded the artillery, was killed, as were several non-commissioned officers and privates; and a number were wounded.



The survivors, who were not wounded, were exhausted by want of sleep, hard duty, and constant exposure to the rain. Colonel Smith himself was disabled by severe contusions, and obliged to retire to Red Bank.

The fort was in ruins; there was danger of its being carried by storm, but the gallant Fleury thought it might yet be defended with the aid of fresh troops. Such were furnished from Varnum's brigade: Lieutenant-Colonel Russell, of the Connecticut line, replaced Colonel Smith. He, in his turn, was obliged to relinquish the command through fatigue and ill health, and was succeeded by Major Thayer of Rhode Island, aided by Captain (afterwards commodore) Talbot, who had distinguished himself in the preceding year by an attack on a ship-of-war in the Hudson. The present was an occasion that required men of desperate valor.

On the fourth day the enemy brought a large Indiaman, cut down to a floating battery, to bear upon the works; but though it opened a terrible fire, it was silenced before night. The next day several ships-of-war got within gunshot. Two prepared to attack it in front; others brought their guns to bear on Fort Mercer; while two made their way into the narrow channel between Mud Island and the Pennsylvania shore, to operate with the British batteries erected there.

At a concerted signal a cannonade was opened from all quarters. The heroic little garrison stood the fire without flinching; the danger, however, was growing imminent. The batteries on Province Island enfiladed the works. The ships in the inner channel approached so near as to throw hand-grenades into the fort, while marines stationed in the round-tops stood ready to pick off any of the garrison that came in sight.

The scene now became awful; incessant firing from ships, forts, gondolas, and floating batteries, with clouds of sulphurous smoke, and the deafening thunder of cannon. Before night there was hardly a fortification to defend; palisades were shattered, guns dismounted, the whole parapet levelled. There was terrible slaughter; most of the company of artillery were destroyed. Fleury himself was wounded. Captain Talbot received a wound in the wrist, but continued bravely fighting until disabled by another wound in the hip.<sup>1</sup>

To hold out longer was impossible. Colonel Thayer made preparations to evacuate the fort in the night. Every thing

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Talbot*, by Henry T. Tuckerman, p. 31.

was removed in the evening, that could be conveyed away without too much exposure to the murderous fire from the round-tops. The wounded were taken over to Red Bank accompanied by part of the garrison. Thayer remained with forty men until eleven o'clock, when they set fire to what was combustible of the fort they had so nobly defended, and crossed to Red Bank by the light of its flames.

The loss of this fort was deeply regretted by Washington, though he gave high praise to the officers and men of the garrison. Colonel Smith was voted a sword by Congress, and Fleury received the commission of lieutenant-colonel.

Washington still hoped to keep possession of Red Bank, and thereby prevent the enemy from weighing the chevaux-de-frise before the frost obliged their ships to quit the river. "I am anxiously waiting the arrival of the troops from the northward," writes he, "who ought, from the time they have had my orders, to have been here before this. Colonel Hamilton, one of my aides, is up the North River, doing all he can to push them forward, but he writes me word, that he finds many unaccountable delays thrown in his way. The want of these troops has embarrassed all my measures exceedingly."

The delays in question will best be explained by a few particulars concerning the mission of Colonel Hamilton. On his way to the head-quarters of Gates, at Albany, he found Governor Clinton and General Putnam encamped on the opposite sides of the Hudson, just above the Highlands; the governor at New Windsor, Putnam at Fishkill. About a mile from New Windsor, Hamilton met Morgan and his riflemen, early in the morning of the 2d of November, on the march for Washington's camp, having been thus tardily detached by Gates. Hamilton urged him to hasten on with all possible despatch, which he promised to do. The colonel had expected to find matters in such a train, that he would have little to do but hurry on ample re-enforcements already on the march; whereas, he found that a large part of the Northern army was to remain in and about Albany, about four thousand men to be spared to the commander-in-chief; the rest were to be stationed on the east side of the Hudson with Putnam, who had held a council of war how to dispose of them. The old general, in fact, had for some time past been haunted by a project of an attack upon New York, in which he had twice been thwarted, and for which the time seemed propitious, now that most of the British troops were reported to have gone from New York to re-enforce General Howe. Hamilton rather disconcerted his project by

directing him, in Washington's name, to hurry forward two Continental brigades to the latter, together with Warner's militia brigade; also, to order to Red Bank a body of Jersey militia about to cross to Peekskill.

Having given these directions, Hamilton hastened on to Albany. He found still less disposition on the part of Gates to furnish the troops required. There was no certainty, he said, that Sir Henry Clinton had gone to join General Howe. There was a possibility of his returning up the river, which would expose the arsenal at Albany to destruction, should that city be left bare of troops. The New-England States, too, would be left open to the ravages and depredations of the enemy; beside, it would put it out of his power to attempt any thing against Ticonderoga, an undertaking of great importance, in which he might engage in the winter. In a word, Gates had schemes of his own, to which those of the commander-in-chief must give way.

Hamilton felt, he says, how embarrassing a task it was for one so young as himself to oppose the opinions and plans of a veteran, whose successes had elevated him to the highest importance; though he considered his reasonings unsubstantial, and merely calculated to "catch the eastern people." It was with the greatest difficulty he prevailed on Gates to detach the brigades of Poor and Patterson to the aid of the commander-in-chief; and, finding re-enforcements fall thus short from this quarter, he wrote to Putnam to forward an additional thousand of Continental troops from his camp. "I doubt," writes he subsequently to Washington, "whether you would have had a man from the Northern army, if the whole could have been kept at Albany with any decency."

Having concluded his mission to General Gates, Hamilton returned to the camp of Governor Clinton. The worthy governor seemed the general officer best disposed in this quarter to promote the public weal, independent of personal considerations. He had recently expressed his opinion to General Gates, that the army under Washington ought at present to be the chief object of attention, "for on its success every thing worth regarding depended."

The only need of troops in this quarter at present, was to protect the country from little plundering parties, and to carry on the works necessary for the defence of the river. The latter was the governor's main thought. He was eager to reconstruct the fortresses out of which he had been so forcibly ejected; or rather to construct new ones in a better place, about West

Point, where obstructions were again to be extended across the river.<sup>1</sup>

Putnam, on the contrary, wished to keep as much force as possible under his control. The old general was once more astride of what Hamilton termed his "hobby-horse," an expedition against New York. He had neglected to forward the troops which had been ordered to the South: not the least attention had been paid by him to Hamilton's order from Albany, in Washington's name, for the detachment of an additional thousand of troops. Some, which had come down from Albany, had been marched by him to Tarrytown: he himself had reconnoitred the country almost down to King's Bridge, and was now advanced to the neighborhood of White Plains. "Every thing," writes Hamilton, "is sacrificed to the whim of taking New York." The young colonel was perplexed how to proceed with the brave-hearted, but somewhat wrong-headed old general; who was in as bellicose a mood, now that he was mounted on his hobby, as when at the siege of Boston he mounted the prize mortar "Congress," and prayed for gunpowder.

Hamilton, in his perplexity, consulted Governor Clinton. The latter agreed with him that an attempt against New York would be a mere "suicidal parade," wasting time and men. The city at present was no object, even if it could be taken, and to take it would require men that could ill be spared from more substantial purposes. The governor, however, understood the character and humors of his old coadjutor, and in his down-right way, advised Hamilton to send an order in the most emphatical terms to General Putnam, to despatch all the Continental troops under him to Washington's assistance, and to detain the militia instead of them.

A little of the governor's own hobby, by the way, showed itself in his councils. "He thinks," writes Hamilton, "that there is no need of more Continental troops here than a few, to give a spur to the militia in working upon the fortifications."

The "emphatical" letter of Hamilton had the effect the governor intended. It unhorsed the belligerent veteran when in full career. The project against New York was again given up, and the re-enforcements reluctantly ordered to the South.

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<sup>1</sup> Governor Clinton and myself have been down to view the forts, and are both of opinion that a boom, thrown across at Fort Constitution, and a battery on each side of the river, would answer a much better purpose than at Fort Montgomery, as the garrison would be re-enforced by militia with more expedition, and the ground much more defensible (defendable?) — Putnam to Washington, 7th November, 1777. — *Sparks' Cor. of the Rev.* ii. 30.

"I am sorry to say," writes Hamilton. "the disposition for marching in the officers, and men in general, of these troops, does not keep pace with my wishes, or the exigency of the occasion. They have unfortunately imbibed an idea that they have done their part of the business of the campaign, and are now entitled to repose. This, and the want of pay, make them adverse to a long march at this advanced season."

Governor Clinton borrowed six thousand dollars for Hamilton, to enable him to put some of the troops in motion; indeed, writes the colonel, he has been the only man who has done anything to remove these difficulties. Hamilton advised that the command of the post should be given to the governor, if he would accept of it, and Putnam should be recalled; "whose blunders and caprices," said he, "are endless."

Washington, however, knew too well the innate worth and sterling patriotism of the old general, to adopt a measure that might deeply mortify him. The enterprise, too, on which the veteran had been bent, was one which he himself had approved of when suggested under other circumstances. He contented himself, therefore, with giving him a reprimand in the course of a letter, for his present dilatoriness in obeying the orders of his commander-in-chief. "I cannot but say," writes he, "there has been more delay in the march of the troops than I think necessary; and I could wish, that in future my orders may be immediately complied with, without arguing upon the propriety of them. If any accident ensues from obeying them, the fault will be upon me, not upon you."

Washington found it more necessary than usual, at this moment, to assert his superior command, from the attempts which were being made to weaken his stand in the public estimation. Still he was not aware of the extent of the intrigues that were in progress around him, in which we believe honest Putnam had no share. There was evidently a similar game going on with that which had displaced the worthy Schuyler. The surrender of Burgoyne, though mainly the result of Washington's far-seeing plans, had suddenly trumped up Gates into a quasi rival. A letter written to Gates at the time, and still existing among his papers, lays open the spirit of the cabal. It is without signature, but in the handwriting of James Lovell, member of Congress from Massachusetts; the same who had supported Gates in opposition to Schuyler. The following are extracts: "You have saved our Northern Hemisphere; and in spite of consummate and repeated blundering, you have changed the condition of the Southern campaign, on the part of the

enemy, from offensive to defensive. . . . The campaign here must soon close ; if our troops are obliged to retire to Lancaster, Reading, Bethlehem, etc., for winter quarters, and the country below is laid open to the enemy's flying parties, great and very general will be the murmur — so great, so general, that nothing inferior to a commander-in-chief will be able to resist the mighty torrent of public clamor and public vengeance.

"We have had a noble army melted down by ill-judged marches — marches that disgrace the authors and directors, and which have occasioned the severest and most just sarcasm and contempt of our enemies.

"How much are you to be envied, my dear general ! How different your conduct and your fortune !

"A letter from Colonel Mifflin, received at the writing of the last paragraph, gives me the disagreeable intelligence of the loss of our fort on the Delaware. You must know the consequences — loss of the river boats, galleys, ships-of-war, etc. ; good winter quarters to the enemy, and a general retreat, or ill-judged, blind attempt on our part to save a gone character.

"Conway, Spotswood, Conner, Ross, and Mifflin resigned, and many other brave and good officers are preparing their letters to Congress on the same subject. In short, this army will be totally lost, unless you come down and collect the virtuous band who wish to fight under your banner, and with their aid save the Southern Hemisphere. Prepare yourself for a jaunt to this place — Congress must send for you."<sup>1</sup>

Under such baleful supervision, of which, as we have observed, he was partly conscious, but not to its full extent, Washington was obliged to carry on a losing game, in which the very elements seemed to conspire against him.

In the mean time, Sir William Howe was following up the reduction of Fort Mifflin by an expedition against Fort Mercer, which still impeded the navigation of the Delaware. On the 17th of November, Lord Cornwallis was detached with two thousand men to cross from Chester into the Jerseys, where he would be joined by a force advancing from New York.

Apprised of this movement, Washington detached General Huntington, with a brigade, to join Varnum at Red Bank. General Greene was also ordered to repair thither with his division, and an express was sent off to General Glover, who was on his way through the Jerseys with his brigade, directing him to file off to the left towards the same point. These troops, with such

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<sup>1</sup> Gates's Papers, N. Y. Hist. Soc. Lib.

militia as could be collected, Washington hoped would be sufficient to save the fort. Before they could form a junction, however, and reach their destination, Cornwallis appeared before it. A defence against such superior force was hopeless. The works were abandoned; they were taken possession of by the enemy, who proceeded to destroy them. After the destruction had been accomplished, the re-enforcements from the North, so long and so anxiously expected, and so shamefully delayed, made their appearance. "Had they arrived but ten days sooner," writes Washington to his brother, "it would, I think, have put it in my power to save Fort Mifflin, which defended the chevaux-de-frise, and consequently have rendered Philadelphia a very ineligible situation for the enemy this winter."

The troops arrived in ragged plight, owing to the derangement of the commissariat. A part of Morgan's rifle corps was absolutely unable to take the field for want of shoes, and such was the prevalent want in this particular, that ten dollars reward was offered in general orders for a model of the best substitute for shoes that could be made out of raw hides.

The evil which Washington had so anxiously striven to prevent had now been effected. The American vessels stationed in the river had lost all protection. Some of the galleys escaped past the batteries of Philadelphia in a fog, and took refuge in the upper part of the Delaware; the rest were set on fire by their crews and abandoned.

The enemy was now in possession of the river, but it was too late in the season to clear away the obstructions, and open a passage for the large ships. All that could be effected at present, was to open a sufficient channel for transports and vessels of easy burden, to bring provisions and supplies for the army.

Washington advised the navy board, now that the enemy had the command of the river, to have all the American frigates scuttled and sunk immediately. The board objected to sinking them, but said they should be ballasted and plugged, ready to be sunk in case of attack. Washington warned them that an attack would be sudden, so as to get possession of them before they could be sunk or destroyed; — his advice and warning were unheeded; the consequence will hereafter be shown.

## CHAPTER VII.

QUESTION OF AN ATTACK ON PHILADELPHIA — GENERAL REED AT HEAD-QUARTERS — ENEMY'S WORKS RECONNOITRED — OPINIONS IN A COUNCIL OF WAR — EXPLOIT OF LAFAYETTE — RECEIVES COMMAND OF A DIVISION — MODIFICATION OF THE BOARD OF WAR — GATES TO PRESIDE — LETTER OF LOVELL — SALLY FORTH OF GENERAL HOWE — EVOLUTIONS AND SKIRMISHES — CONWAY INSPECTOR-GENERAL — CONSULTATION ABOUT WINTER QUARTERS — DREARY MARCH TO VALLEY FORGE — HUTTING — WASHINGTON'S VINDICATORY LETTERS — RETROSPECT OF THE YEAR.

ON the evening of the 24th of November Washington reconnoitred, carefully and thoughtfully, the lines and defences about Philadelphia, from the opposite side of the Schuylkill. His army was now considerably re-enforced; the garrison was weakened by the absence of a large body of troops under Lord Cornwallis in the Jerseys. Some of the general officers thought this an advantageous moment for an attack upon the city. Such was the opinion of Lord Stirling; and especially of General Wayne, Mad Anthony, as he was familiarly called, always eager for some daring enterprise. The recent victory at Saratoga had dazzled the public mind, and produced a general impatience for something equally striking and effective in this quarter. Reed, Washington's former secretary, now a brigadier-general, shared largely in this feeling. He had written a letter to Gates, congratulating him on having "reduced his proud and insolent enemy to the necessity of laying his arms at his feet;" assuring him that it would "enroll his name with the happy few who shine in history, not as conquerors, but as distinguished generals. I have for some time," adds he, "volunteered with this army, which, notwithstanding the labors and efforts of its amiable chief, has yet gathered no laurels."<sup>1</sup>

Reed was actually at head-quarters as a volunteer, again enjoying much of Washington's confidence, and anxious that he should do something to meet the public wishes. Washington was aware of this prevalent feeling, and that it was much wrought on by the intrigues of designing men, and by the sarcasms of the press. He was now reconnoitring the enemy's works to judge of the policy of the proposed attack. "A vig-

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<sup>1</sup> Reed to Gates. Gates's Papers.



orous exertion is under consideration," writes Reed; "God grant it may be successful!"<sup>1</sup>

Every thing in the neighborhood of the enemy's lines bore traces of the desolating hand of war. Several houses, owned probably by noted patriots, had been demolished; others burnt. Villas stood roofless; their doors and windows, and all the wood-work, had been carried off to make huts for the soldiery. Nothing but bare walls remained. Gardens had been trampled down and destroyed; not a fence nor fruit-tree was to be seen. The gathering gloom of a November evening heightened the sadness of this desolation.

With an anxious eye Washington scrutinized the enemy's works. They appeared to be exceeding strong. A chain of redoubts extended along the most commanding ground from the Schuylkill to the Delaware. They were framed, planked, and of great thickness, and were surrounded by a deep ditch, enclosed and fraised. The intervals were filled with an abatis, in constructing which all the apple-trees of the neighborhood, beside forest-trees, had been sacrificed.<sup>2</sup>

The idea of Lord Stirling and those in favor of an attack, was, that it should be at different points at daylight; the main body to attack the lines to the north of the city, while Greene, embarking his men in boats at Dunk's Ferry, and passing down the Delaware, and Potter, with a body of Continentals and militia, moving down the west side of the Schuylkill, should attack the eastern and western fronts.

Washington saw there was an opportunity for a brilliant blow, that might satisfy the impatience of the public, and silence the sarcasms of the press; but he saw that it must be struck at the expense of a fearful loss of life.

Returning to camp, he held a council of war of his principal officers, in which the matter was debated at great length and with some warmth, but without coming to a decision. At breaking up, Washington requested that each member of the council would give his opinion the next morning in writing, and he sent off a messenger in the night for the written opinion of General Greene.

Only four members of the council, Stirling, Wayne, Scott and Woodford, were in favor of an attack; of which Lord Stirling drew up the plan. Eleven (including Greene) were against it, objecting, among other things, that the enemy's lines were too strong and too well supported, and their force too

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<sup>1</sup> Reed to President Wharton.

<sup>2</sup> Life and Cor. of Reed, vol. 1. p. 341.

numerous, well disciplined and experienced, to be assailed without great loss and the hazard of a failure.

Had Washington been actuated by mere personal ambition and a passion for military fame, or had he yielded to the goadings of faction and the press, he might have disregarded the loss and hazarded the failure; but his patriotism was superior to his ambition; he shrank from a glory that must be achieved at such a cost, and the idea of an attack was abandoned.

General Reed, in a letter to Thomas Wharton, president of Pennsylvania, endeavors to prevent the cavilling of that functionary and his co-legislators; who, though they had rendered very slender assistance in the campaign, were extremely urgent for some striking achievement. "From my own feelings," writes he, "I can easily judge of yours and the gentlemen round, at the seeming inactivity of this army for so long a time. I know it is peculiarly irksome to the general, whose own judgment led to more vigorous measures; but there has been so great a majority of his officers opposed to every enterprising plan, as fully justifies his conduct." At the same time Reed confesses that he himself concurs with the great majority, who deemed an attack upon Philadelphia too hazardous.

A letter from General Greene received about this time, gave Washington some gratifying intelligence about his youthful friend, the Marquis de Lafayette. Though not quite recovered from the wound received at the battle of Brandywine, he had accompanied General Greene as a volunteer in his expedition into the Jerseys, and had been indulged by him with an opportunity of gratifying his belligerent humor, in a brush with Cornwallis's outposts. "The marquis," writes Greene, "with about four hundred militia and the rifle corps, attacked the enemy's picket last evening, killed about twenty, wounded many more, and took about twenty prisoners. The marquis is charmed with the spirited behavior of the militia and rifle corps; they drove the enemy above half a mile, and kept the ground until dark. The enemy's picket consisted of about three hundred, and were re-enforced during the skirmish. The marquis is determined to be in the way of danger."<sup>1</sup>

Lafayette himself, at the request of Greene, wrote an animated yet modest account of the affair to Washington. "I wish," observes he, "that this little success of ours may please you; though a very trifling one, I find it very interesting on account of the behavior of our soldiers."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings. Sparks, vol. v. p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Lafayette*, vol. i. p. 122.

Washington had repeatedly written to Congress in favor of giving the marquis a command equal to his nominal rank, in consideration of his illustrious and important connections, the attachment he manifested to the cause, and the discretion and good sense he had displayed on various occasions. "I am convinced," said he, "he possesses a large share of that military ardor which generally characterizes the nobility of his country."

Washington availed himself of the present occasion to support his former recommendations, by transmitting to Congress an account of Lafayette's youthful exploit. He received, in return, an intimation from that body, that it was their pleasure he should appoint the marquis to the command of a division in the Continental army. The division of General Stephen at this time was vacant; that veteran officer, who had formerly won honor for himself in the French war, having been dismissed for misconduct at the battle of Germantown, the result of intemperate habits, into which he unfortunately had fallen. Lafayette was forthwith appointed to the command of that division.

At this juncture (November 27), a modification took place in the Board of War, indicative of the influence which was operating in Congress. It was increased from three to five members: General Mifflin, Joseph Trumbull, Richard Peters, Colonel Pickering, and last, though certainly not least, General Gates. Mifflin's resignation of the commission of quartermaster-general had recently been accepted; but that of major-general was continued to him, though without pay. General Gates was appointed president of the board, and the president of Congress was instructed to express to him, in communicating the intelligence, the high sense which that body entertained of his abilities, and peculiar fitness to discharge the duties of that important office, upon the right execution of which the success of the American cause so eminently depended; and to inform him it was their intention to continue his rank as major-general, and that he might officiate at the board or in the field, as occasion might require; furthermore, that he should repair to Congress with all convenient despatch, to enter upon the duties of his appointment. It was evidently the idea of the cabal that Gates was henceforth to be the master spirit of the war. His friend Lovell, chairman of the committee of foreign relations, writes to him on the same day to urge him on. "We want you at different places; but we want you most near Germantown. Good God! What a situation we are in; how

different from what might have been justly expected! You will be astonished when you know accurately what numbers have at one time and another been collected near Philadelphia, to wear out stockings, shoes and breeches. Depend upon it, for every ten soldiers placed under the command of our Fabius, five recruits will be wanted annually during the war. The brave fellows at Fort Mifflin and Red Bank have despaired of succor, and been obliged to quit. The naval departments have fallen into circumstances of seeming disgrace. Come to the Board of War, if only for a short season. . . . If it was not for the defeat of Burgoyne, and the strong appearances of a European war, our affairs are Fabiused into a very disagreeable posture."<sup>1</sup>

While busy faction was thus at work, both in and out of Congress, to undermine the fame and authority of Washington, General Howe, according to his own threat, was preparing to "drive him beyond the mountains."

On the 4th of December, Captain Allen McLane, a vigilant officer already mentioned, of the Maryland line, brought word to head-quarters, that an attack was to be made that very night on the camp at White Marsh. Washington made his dispositions to receive the meditated assault, and, in the mean time, detached McLane with one hundred men to reconnoitre. The latter met the van of the enemy about eleven o'clock at night, on the Germantown Road; attacked it at the Three Mile Run, forced it to change its line of march, and hovered about and impeded it throughout the night. About three o'clock in the morning the alarm-gun announced the approach of the enemy. They appeared at daybreak, and encamped on Chestnut Hill, within three miles of Washington's right wing. Brigadier-General James Irvine, with six hundred of the Pennsylvania militia, was sent out to skirmish with their light advanced parties. He encountered them at the foot of the hill, but after a short conflict, in which several were killed and wounded, his troops gave way and fled in all directions, leaving him and four or five of his men wounded on the field, who were taken prisoners.

General Howe passed the day in reconnoitring, and at night changed his ground, and moved to a hill on the left, and within a mile of the American line. It was his wish to have a general action; but to have it on advantageous terms. He had scrutinized Washington's position and pronounced it inacces-

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<sup>1</sup> Gates's Papers, N. Y. Hist. Soc. Lib.

sible. For three days he manœuvred to draw him from it, shifting his own position occasionally, but still keeping on advantageous ground. Washington was not to be decoyed. He knew the vast advantages which superior science, discipline and experience, gave the enemy in open field fight, and remained within his lines. All his best officers approved of his policy. Several sharp skirmishes occurred at Edge Hill and elsewhere, in which Morgan's riflemen and the Maryland militia were concerned. There was loss on both sides, but the Americans gave way before a great superiority of numbers.

In one of these skirmishes General Reed had a narrow escape. He was reconnoitring the enemy at Washington's request, when he fell in with some of the Pennsylvania militia who had been scattered, and endeavored to rally and lead them forward. His horse was shot through the head, and came with him to the ground; the enemy's flankers were running to bayonet him, as he was recovering from his fall, when Captain Allen McLane came up in time with his men to drive them off and rescue him. He was conveyed from the field by a light-horseman.<sup>1</sup>

On the 7th there was every appearance that Howe meditated an attack on the left wing. Washington's heart now beat high, and he prepared for a warm and decisive action. In the course of the day he rode through every brigade, giving directions how the attack was to be met, and exhorting his troops to depend mainly on the bayonet. His men were inspired by his words, but still more by his looks, so calm and determined; for the soldier regards the demeanor more than the words of his general in the hour of peril.

The day wore away with nothing but skirmishes, in which Morgan's riflemen, and the Maryland militia under Colonel Gist, rendered good service. An attack was expected in the night or early in the morning; but no attack took place. The spirit manifested by the Americans in their recent contests, had rendered the British commanders cautious.

The next day, in the afternoon, the enemy were again in motion; but instead of advancing, filed off to the left, halted, and lit up a long string of fires on the heights; behind which they retreated, silently and precipitately, in the night. By the time Washington received intelligence of their movement, they were in full march by two or three routes for Philadelphia. He immediately detached light parties to fall upon their rear, but

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<sup>1</sup> Life and Cor. of Reed, vol. 1., p. 351.

they were too far on the way for any but light horse to overtake them.

An intelligent observer writes to President Wharton from the camp: "As all their movements, added to their repeated declarations of driving General Washington over the Blue Mountains, were calculated to assure us of their having come out with the determination to fight, it was thought prudent to keep our post upon the hills, near the church. I understand it was resolved, if they did not begin the attack soon, to have fought them at all events, it not being supposed that they could, consistent with their own feelings, have secretly stolen into the city so suddenly, after so long gasconading on what they intended to do."<sup>1</sup>

Here then was another occasion of which the enemies of Washington availed themselves to deride his cautious policy. Yet it was clearly dictated by true wisdom. His heart yearned for a general encounter with the enemy. In his despatch to the President of Congress, he writes, "I sincerely wish that they had made an attack; as the issue, in all probability, from the disposition of our troops and the strong situation of our camp, would have been fortunate and happy. At the same time I must add, that reason, prudence, and every principle of policy forbade us from quitting our post to attack them. Nothing but success would have justified the measure; and this could not be expected from their position."

At this time, one of the earliest measures recommended by the Board of War, and adopted by Congress, showed the increasing influence of the cabal; two inspectors-general were to be appointed for the promotion of discipline and reformation of abuses in the army; and one of the persons chosen for this important office was Conway, with the rank, too, of major-general! This was tacitly in defiance of the opinion so fully expressed by Washington of the demerits of the man, and the ruinous effects to be apprehended from his promotion over the heads of brigadiers of superior claims. Conway, however, was the secret colleague of Gates, and Gates was now the rising sun.

Winter had now set in with all its severity. The troops, worn down by long and hard service, had need of repose. Poorly clad, also, and almost destitute of blankets, they required a warmer shelter than mere tents against the inclemencies of the season. The nearest towns which would afford

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Elias Boudinot, Commissary of Prisoners, to President Wharton. — *Life and Cor. of J. Reed*, vol. 1. p. 351.

winter quarters, were Lancaster, York and Carlisle; but should the army retire to either of these, a large and fertile district would be exposed to be foraged by the foe, and its inhabitants, perhaps, to be dragooned into submission.

Much anxiety was felt by the Pennsylvania Legislature on the subject, who were desirous that the army should remain in the field. General Reed, in a letter to the president of that body, writes: "A line of winter quarters has been proposed and supported by some of his [Washington's] principal officers; but I believe I may assure you he will not come into it, but take post as near the enemy, and cover as much of the country as the nakedness and wretched condition of some part of the army will admit. To keep the field entirely is impracticable, and so you would think if you saw the plight we were in. You will soon know the plan, and as it has been adopted principally upon the opinions of the gentlemen of this State, I hope it will give satisfaction to you and the gentlemen around you. If it is not doing what we would, it is doing what we can; and I must say the general has shown a truly feeling and patriotic respect for us on this occasion, in which you would agree with me, if you knew all the circumstances."

The plan adopted by Washington, after holding a council of war, and weighing the discordant opinions of his officers, was to hut the army for the winter at Valley Forge, in Chester County, and the west side of the Schuylkill, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. Here he would be able to keep a vigilant eye on that city, and at the same time protect a great extent of country.

Sad and dreary was the march to Valley Forge; uncheered by the recollection of any recent triumph, as was the march to winter quarters in the preceding year. Hungry and cold were the poor fellows who had so long been keeping the field; for provisions were scant, clothing worn out, and so badly off were they for shoes, that the footsteps of many might be tracked in blood. Yet at this very time we are told, "hogsheads of shoes, stockings, and clothing, were lying at different places on the roads and in the woods, perishing for want of teams, or of money to pay the teamsters."<sup>1</sup>

Such were the consequences of the derangement of the commissariat.

Arrived at Valley Forge on the 17th, the troops had still to brave the wintry weather in their tents, until they could cut

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon's Hist. Am. War, vol. II. p. 279.

down trees and construct huts for their accommodation. Those who were on the sick list had to seek temporary shelter wherever it could be found, among the farmers of the neighborhood. According to the regulations in the orderly book, each hut was to be fourteen feet by sixteen; with walls of logs filled in with clay, six feet and a half high; the fireplaces were of logs plastered; and logs split into rude planks or slabs furnished the roofing. A hut was allotted to twelve non-commissioned officers and soldiers. A general officer had a hut to himself. The same was allowed to the staff of each brigade and regiment, and the field officer of each regiment; and a hut to the commissioned officers of each company. The huts of the soldiery fronted on streets. Those of the officers formed a line in the rear, and the encampment gradually assumed the look of a rude military village.

Scarce had the troops been two days employed in these labors, when, before daybreak on the 22d, word was brought that a body of the enemy had made a sortie toward Chester apparently on a foraging expedition. Washington issued orders to Generals Huntington and Varnum, to hold their troops in readiness to march against them. Their replies bespeak the forlorn state of the army. "Fighting will be far preferable to starving," writes Huntington. "My brigade are out of provisions, nor can the commissary obtain any meat. I have used every argument my imagination can invent to make the soldiers easy, but I despair of being able to do it much longer."

"It's a very pleasing circumstance to the division under my command," writes Varnum, "that there is a probability of their marching; three days successively we have been destitute of bread. Two days we have been entirely without meat. The men must be supplied, or they cannot be commanded."

In fact, a dangerous mutiny had broken out among the famishing troops in the preceding night, which their officers had had great difficulty in quelling.

Washington instantly wrote to the President of Congress on the subject. "I do not know from what cause this alarming deficiency, or rather total failure of supplies arises; but unless more vigorous exertions and better regulations take place in that line (the commissaries' department) immediately, the army must dissolve. I have done all in my power by remonstrating, by writing, by ordering the commissaries on this head, from time to time; but without any good effect, or obtaining more than a present scanty relief. Owing to this, the march of the army has been delayed on more than one interesting occasion,



in the course of the present campaign ; and had a body of the enemy crossed the Schuylkill this morning, as I had reason to expect, the divisions which I ordered to be in readiness to march and meet them could not have moved."

Scarce had Washington despatched this letter, when he learnt that the Legislature of Pennsylvania had addressed a remonstrance to Congress against his going into winter-quarters, instead of keeping in the open field. This letter, received in his forlorn situation, surrounded by an unhoused, scantily clad, half-starved army, shivering in the midst of December's snow and cold, put an end to his forbearance, and drew from him another letter to the President of Congress, dated on the 23d, which we shall largely quote ; not only for its manly and truthful eloquence, but for the exposition it gives of the difficulties of his situation, mainly caused by unwise and intermeddling legislation.

And first as to the commissariat : —

"Though I have been tender, heretofore," writes he, "of giving any opinion, or lodging complaints, as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgment, and the consequences thereof were predicted ; yet, finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar, but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth, then, I can declare, that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have by every department of the army.

"Since the month of July, we have had no assistance from the quartermaster-general ; and to want of assistance from this department, the commissary-general charges great part of his deficiency. To this I am to add, that notwithstanding it is a standing order, and often repeated, that the troops shall always have two days' provisions by them, that they might be ready at any sudden call ; yet an opportunity has scarcely ever offered of taking an advantage of the enemy, that it has not been either totally obstructed, or greatly impeded on this account. . . . As a proof of the little benefit received from a clothier-general, and as a further proof of the inability of an army, under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers (besides a number of men confined to hospitals for want of shoes, and others in farmers' houses on the same account), we have, by a field return this day made, no less than two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight men now in camp unfit for duty, because they are barefoot, and otherwise naked.

By the same return, it appears that our whole strength in Continental troops, including the eastern brigades, which have joined us since the surrender of General Burgoyne, exclusive of the Maryland troops sent to Wilmington, amounts to no more than eight thousand two hundred in camp fit for duty; notwithstanding which and that since the 4th instant, our numbers fit for duty, from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly on account of blankets (numbers having been obliged, and still are, to sit up all night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural and common way), have decreased near two thousand men.

“ We find, gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter-quarters or not (for I am sure no resolution of mine could warrant the remonstrance), reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I have described ours to be — which are by no means exaggerated — to confine a superior one, in all respects well appointed and provided for a winter’s campaign, within the city of Philadelphia, and to cover from depredation and waste the States of Pennsylvania and Jersey. But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye, is that these very gentlemen, who were well apprised of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration, who thought their own soldiers worse clad than others, and who advised me near a month ago to postpone the execution of a plan I was about to adopt, in consequence of a resolve of Congress for seizing clothes, under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days, agreeably to a decree of the State (not one article of which, by the by, is yet come to hand), should think a winter’s campaign, and the covering of those States from the invasion of an enemy, so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen, that it is a much easier, and less distressing thing, to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel abundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent.

“ It is for these reasons, therefore, that I have dwelt upon the subject; and it adds not a little to my other difficulties

and distress, to find that much more is expected from me than is possible to be performed, and that, upon the ground of safety and policy, I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from public view, and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny."

In the present exigency, to save his camp from desolation, and to relieve his starving soldiery, he was compelled to exercise the authority recently given him by Congress, to forage the country round, seize supplies wherever he could find them, and pay for them in money or in certificates redeemable by Congress. He exercised these powers with great reluctance; rurally inclined himself, he had a strong sympathy with the cultivators of the soil, and ever regarded the yeomanry with a paternal eye. He was apprehensive, moreover, of irritating the jealousy of military sway, prevalent throughout the country, and of corrupting the morals of the army. "Such procedures," writes he to the President of Congress, "may give a momentary relief; but if repeated, will prove of the most pernicious consequence. Beside spreading disaffection, jealousy and fear among the people, they never fail, even in the most veteran troops, under the most rigid and exact discipline, to raise in the soldiery a disposition to licentiousness, to plunder and robbery, difficult to suppress afterward, and which has proved not only ruinous to the inhabitants, but in many instances to armies themselves. I regret the occasion that compelled us to the measure the other day, and shall consider it the greatest of our misfortunes if we should be under the necessity of practising it again."

How truly in all these trying scenes of his military career, does the patriot rise above the soldier!

With these noble and high-spirited appeals to Congress, we close Washington's operations for 1777; one of the most arduous and eventful years of his military life, and one the most trying to his character and fortunes. He began it with an empty army chest, and a force dwindled down to four thousand half-disciplined men. Throughout the year he had had to contend, not merely with the enemy, but with the parsimony and meddlesome interference of Congress. In his most critical times that body had left him without funds and without re-enforcements. It had made promotions contrary to his advice, and contrary to military usage; thereby wronging and disgusting some of his bravest officers. It had changed the commissariat in the very midst of a campaign, and thereby thrown the whole service into confusion.

Among so many cross-purposes and discouragements, it was a difficult task for Washington to "keep the life and soul of the army together." Yet he had done so. Marvellous indeed was the manner in which he had soothed the discontents of his aggrieved officers, and reconciled them to an ill-requiting service; and still more marvellous the manner in which he had breathed his own spirit of patience and perseverance in his yeoman soldiery, during their sultry marchings and counter-marchings through the Jerseys, under all kinds of privation, with no visible object of pursuit to stimulate their ardor, hunting, as it were, the rumored apparitions of an unseen fleet.

All this time, too, while endeavoring to ascertain and counteract the operations of Lord Howe upon the ocean, and his brother upon the land, he was directing and aiding military measures against Burgoyne in the North. Three games were in a manner going on under his supervision. The operations of the commander-in-chief are not always most obvious to the public eye; victories may be planned in his tent, of which subordinate generals get the credit; and most of the moves which ended in giving a triumphant check to Burgoyne, may be traced to Washington's shifting camp in the Jerseys.

It has been an irksome task in some of the preceding chapters, to notice the under-current of intrigue and management by which some part of this year's campaign was disgraced; yet even-handed justice requires that such machinations should be exposed. We have shown how successful they were in displacing the noble-hearted Schuyler from the head of the Northern department; the same machinations were now at work to undermine the commander-in-chief, and elevate the putative hero of Saratoga on his ruins. He was painfully aware of them; yet in no part of the war did he more thoroughly evince that magnanimity which was his grand characteristic, than in the last scenes of this campaign where he rose above tauntings of the press, the sneering of the cabal, the murmurs of the public, the suggestions of some of his friends, and the throbbing impulses of his own courageous heart, and adhered to that Fabian policy which he considered essential to the safety of the cause. To dare is often the impulse of selfish ambition or harebrained valor: to forbear is at times the proof of real greatness.

## CHAPTER VIII.

GATES IN THE ASCENDANT — THE CONWAY LETTER — SUSPICIONS — CONSEQUENT CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GATES AND WASHINGTON — WARNING LETTER FROM DR. CRAIK — ANONYMOUS LETTERS — PROJECTED EXPEDITION TO CANADA — LAFAYETTE, GATES, AND THE BOARD OF WAR.

WHILE censure and detraction had dogged Washington throughout his harassing campaign, and followed him to his forlorn encampment at Valley Forge, Gates was the constant theme of popular eulogium, and was held up by the cabal, as the only one capable of retrieving the desperate fortunes of the South. Letters from his friends in Congress urged him to hasten on, take his seat at the head of the Board of War, assume the management of military affairs, and *save the country!*

Gates was not a strong-minded man. Is it a wonder, then, that his brain should be bewildered by the fumes of incense offered up on every side? In the midst of his triumph, however, while feasting on the sweets of adulation, came the withering handwriting on the wall! It is an epistle from his friend Mifflin. "My dear General," writes he, "an extract from Conway's letter to you has been procured and sent to head-quarters. The extract was a collection of just sentiments, yet such as should not have been intrusted to any of your family. General Washington enclosed it to Conway without remarks. . . . My dear General, take care of your sincerity and frank disposition; they cannot injure yourself, but may injure some of your best friends. Affectionately yours."

Nothing could surpass the trouble and confusion of mind of Gates on the perusal of this letter. Part of his correspondence with Conway had been sent to head-quarters. But what part? What was the purport and extent of the alleged extracts? How had they been obtained? Who had sent them? Mifflin's letter specified nothing; and this silence as to particulars, left an unbounded field for tormenting conjecture. In fact, Mifflin knew nothing in particular when he wrote; nor did any of the cabal. The laconic nature of Washington's note to Conway had thrown them all in confusion. None knew the extent of the correspondence discovered, nor how far they might be individually compromised.

Gates, in his perplexity, suspected that his portfolio had been stealthily opened and his letters copied. But which of them?—and by whom? He wrote to Conway and Mifflin, anxiously inquiring what part of their correspondence had been thus surreptitiously obtained, and “who was the villain that had played him this treacherous trick. There is scarcely a man living,” says he, “who takes a greater care of his letters than I do. I never fail to lock them up, and keep the key in my pocket. . . . No punishment is too severe for the wretch who betrayed me; and I doubt not your friendship for me, as well as your zeal for our safety, will bring the name of this miscreant to light.”<sup>1</sup>

Gates made rigid inquiries among the gentlemen of his staff; all disavowed any knowledge of the matter. In the confusion and perturbation of his mind, his suspicions glanced, or were turned, upon Colonel Hamilton, as the channel of communication, he having had free access to head-quarters during his late mission from the commander-in-chief. In this state of mental trepidation, Gates wrote, on the 8th of December, the following letter to Washington.

“SIR:—I shall not attempt to describe what, as a private gentleman, I cannot help feeling, on representing to my mind the disagreeable situation in which confidential letters, when exposed to public inspection, may place an unsuspecting correspondent; but, as a public officer, I conjure your Excellency to give me all the assistance you can in tracing the author of the infidelity which put extracts from General Conway’s letters to me into your hands. Those letters have been stealthily copied, but which of them, when, and by whom, is to me as yet an unfathomable secret. . . . It is, I believe, in your Excellency’s power to do me and the United States a very important service, by detecting a wretch who may betray me, and capitally injure the very operations under your immediate directions. . . . The crime being eventually so important, that the least loss of time may be attended with the worst consequences, and it being unknown to me whether the letter came to you from a member of Congress, or from an officer, I shall have the honor of transmitting a copy of this to the president, that the Congress may, in concert with your Excellency, obtain as soon as possible a discovery which so deeply affects the safety of the States. Crimes of that magnitude ought not to remain unpunished.” A copy of this letter was transmitted by Gates to the President of Congress.

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<sup>1</sup> Gates’s Papers, N. Y. Hist. Lib.

Washington replied with characteristic dignity and candor. "Your letter of the 8th ultimo," writes he (January 4), "came to my hand a few days ago, and, to my great surprise, informed me that a copy of it had been sent to Congress, for what reason I find myself unable to account; but, as some end was doubtless intended to be answered by it, I am laid under the disagreeable necessity of returning my answer through the same channel, lest any member of that honorable body should harbor an unfavorable suspicion of my having practised some indirect means to come at the contents of the confidential letters between you and General Conway.

"I am to inform you, then, that Colonel Wilkinson, on his way to Congress, in the month of October last, fell in with Lord Stirling at Reading, and, not in confidence, that I ever understood, informed his aide-de-camp, Major McWilliams, that General Conway had written this to you: 'Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak general and bad counsellors would have ruined it.' Lord Stirling, from motives of friendship, transmitted the account with this remark: 'The enclosed was communicated by Colonel Wilkinson to Major McWilliams. Such wicked duplicity of conduct I shall always think it my duty to detect.'"

Washington adds, that the letter written by him to Conway was merely to show that gentleman that he was not unapprised of his intriguing disposition. "Neither this letter," continues he, "nor the information which occasioned it, was ever directly or indirectly communicated by me to a single officer in this army, out of my own family, excepting the Marquis de Lafayette, who, having been spoken to on the subject by General Conway, applied for and saw, under injunctions of secrecy, the letter which contained Wilkinson's information; so desirous was I of concealing every matter that could, in its consequences, give the smallest interruption to the tranquillity of this army, or afford a gleam of hope to the enemy by dissensions therein." . . . "Till Lord Stirling's letter came to my hands, I never knew that General Conway, whom I viewed in the light of a stranger to you, was a correspondent of yours; much less did I suspect that I was the subject of your confidential letters. Pardon me, then, for adding, that so far from conceiving the safety of the States can be affected, or in the smallest degree injured, by a discovery of this kind, or that I should be called upon in such solemn terms to point out the author, I considered the information as coming from yourself, and given with a view to forewarn, and consequently to forearm

me, against a secret enemy, or in other words, a dangerous incendiary; in which character sooner or later this country will know General Conway. But in this, as in other matters of late, I have found myself mistaken."

This clear and ample answer explained the enigma of the laconic note to Conway, and showed that the betrayal of the defamatory correspondence was due to the babbling of Wilkinson. Following the mode adopted by Gates, Washington transmitted his reply through the hands of the President of Congress, and thus this matter, which he had generously kept secret, became blazoned before Congress and the world.

A few days after writing the above letter, Washington received the following warning from his old and faithful friend, Dr. Craik, dated from Maryland, January 6. "Notwithstanding your unwearied diligence and the unparalleled sacrifice of domestic happiness and ease of mind which you have made for the good of your country, yet you are not wanting in secret enemies, who would rob you of the great and truly deserved esteem your country has for you. Base and villainous men, through chagrin, envy or ambition, are endeavoring to lessen you in the minds of the people, and taking underhand methods to traduce your character. The morning I left camp, I was informed that a strong faction was forming against you in the new Board of War, and in the Congress. . . . The method they are taking is by holding General Gates up to the people, and making them believe that you have had a number three or four times greater than the enemy, and have done nothing; that Philadelphia was given up by your management, and that you have had many opportunities of defeating the enemy. It is said they dare not appear openly as your enemies; but that the new Board of War is composed of such leading men, as will throw such obstacles and difficulties in your way as to force you to resign." <sup>1</sup>

An anonymous letter to Patrick Henry, dated from Yorktown, January 12, says among other things, "We have only passed the Red Sea; a dreary wilderness is still before us, and unless a Moses or a Joshua are raised up in our behalf, we must perish before we reach the promised land. . . . But is our case desperate? By no means. We have wisdom, virtue and strength enough to save us, if they could be called into action. The Northern army has shown us what Americans are capable of doing with a general at their head. The spirit of the South-

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<sup>1</sup> Spark's. *Washington's Writings*, vol. v. p. 493



ern army is no way inferior to the spirit of the Northern. A Gates, a Lee, or a Conway, would in a few weeks render them an irresistible body of men. The last of the above officers has accepted of the new office of inspector-general of our army, in order to reform abuses; but the remedy is only a palliative one. In one of his letters to a friend, he says, 'a great and good God hath decreed America to be free, or the [general] and weak counsellors would have ruined her long ago.'"<sup>1</sup>

Another anonymous paper, probably by the same hand, dated January 17, and sent to Congress under a cover directed to the president, Mr. Laurens, decried all the proceedings of the Southern army, declaring that the proper method of attacking, beating and conquering the enemy, had never as yet been adopted by the commander-in-chief; that the late success to the Northward was owing to a change of the commanders: that the Southern army would have been alike successful had a similar change taken place. After dwelling on the evils and derangements prevalent in every department, it draws the conclusion, "That the head cannot possibly be sound, when the whole body is disordered; that the people of America have been guilty of idolatry, by making a man their God, and the God of heaven and earth will convince them by woful experience, that he is only a man; that no good may be expected from the standing army until Baal and his worshippers are banished from the camp.""<sup>2</sup>

Instead of laying this mischievous paper before Congress, Mr. Laurens remitted it to Washington. He received the following reply: "I cannot sufficiently express the obligation I feel to you for your friendship and politeness, upon an occasion in which I am so deeply interested. I was not unapprised that a malignant faction had been for some time forming to my prejudice; which, conscious as I am of having ever done all in my power to answer the important purposes of the trust reposed in me, could not but give me some pain on a personal account. But my chief concern arises from an apprehension of the dangerous consequences which intestine dissensions may produce to the common cause.

"My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets which it is

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks. Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 493.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, vol. v. p. 497.

of the utmost moment to conceal. But why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? Merit and talents, with which I can have no pretensions of rivalry, have ever been subject to it. My heart tells me, that it has ever been my unremitted aim to do the best that circumstances would permit; yet I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and may in many instances deserve the imputation of error."

Gates was disposed to mark his advent to power by a striking operation. A notable project had been concerted by him and the Board of War for a winter irruption into Canada. An expedition was to proceed from Albany, cross Lake Champlain on the ice, burn the British shipping at St. John's, and press forward to Montreal. Washington was not consulted in the matter: the project was submitted to Congress, and sanctioned by them without his privity.

One object of the scheme was to detach the Marquis de Lafayette from Washington, to whom he was devotedly attached, and bring him into the interests of the cabal. For this purpose he was to have the command of the expedition; an appointment which it was thought would tempt his military ambition. Conway was to be second in command, and it was trusted that his address and superior intelligence would virtually make him the leader.

The first notice that Washington received of the project was in a letter from Gates, enclosing one to Lafayette, informing the latter of his appointment, and requiring his attendance at Yorktown to receive his instructions.

Gates, in his letter to Washington, asked his opinion and advice; evidently as a matter of form. The latter expressed himself obliged by the "polite request," but observed that, as he neither knew the extent of the objects in view, nor the means to be employed to effect them, it was not in his power to pass any judgment upon the subject. He wished success to the enterprise, "both as it might advance the public good and confer personal honor on the Marquis de Lafayette, for whom he had a very particular esteem and regard."

The cabal, however, had overshot their mark. Lafayette, who was aware of their intrigues, was so disgusted by the want of deference and respect to the commander-in-chief evinced in the whole proceedings, that he would at once have declined the appointment, had not Washington himself advised him strongly to accept it.

He accordingly proceeded to Yorktown, where Gates already

had his little court of schemers and hangers on. Lafayette found him at table, presiding with great hilarity, for he was social in his habits, and in the flush of recent success. The young marquis had a cordial welcome to his board, which in its buoyant conviviality contrasted with the sober decencies of that of the thoughtful commander-in-chief in his dreary encampment at Valley Forge. Gates, in his excitement, was profuse of promises. Every thing was to be made smooth and easy for Lafayette. He was to have at least two thousand five hundred fighting men under him. Stark, the veteran Stark, was ready to co-operate with a body of Green Mountain Boys. "Indeed," cried Gates, chuckling, "General Stark will have burnt the fleet before your arrival!"

It was near the end of the repast. The wine had circulated freely, and toasts had been given according to the custom of the day. The marquis thought it time to show his flag. One toast, he observed, had been omitted, which he would now propose. Glasses were accordingly filled, and he gave, "The commander-in-chief of the American armies." The toast was received without cheering.

Lafayette was faithful to the flag he had unfurled. In accepting the command, he considered himself detached from the main army under the immediate orders of the commander-in-chief. He had a favorable opinion of the military talents of Conway, but he was aware of the game he was playing; he made a point, therefore, of having the Baron de Kalb appointed to the expedition; whose commission being of older date than that of Conway, would give him the precedence of that officer, and make him second in command. This was reluctantly ceded by the cabal, who found themselves baffled by the loyalty in friendship of the youthful soldier.

Lafayette set out for Albany without any very sanguine expectations. Writing to Washington from Flemington, amid the difficulties of winter travel, he says: "I go on very slowly; sometimes drenched by rain, sometimes covered with snow, and not entertaining many handsome thoughts about the projected incursion into Canada. Lake Champlain is too cold for producing the least bit of laurel; and, if I am not starved, I shall be as proud as if I had gained three battles."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Spark's Cor. Am. Rev., vol. ii. p. 74.

## CHAPTER IX.

GATES UNDERTAKES TO EXPLAIN THE CONWAY CORRESPONDENCE  
— WASHINGTON'S SEARCHING ANALYSIS OF THE EXPLANATION —  
CLOSE OF THE CORRESPONDENCE — SPURIOUS LETTERS PUBLISHED  
— LAFAYETTE AND THE CANADA EXPEDITION — HIS PERPLEXITIES  
— COUNSELS OF WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON's letter of the 4th of January, on the subject of the Conway correspondence, had not reached General Gates until the 22d of January, after his arrival at Yorktown. No sooner did Gates learn from its context, that all Washington's knowledge of that correspondence was confined to a single paragraph of a letter, and that merely as quoted in conversation by Wilkinson, than the whole matter appeared easily to be explained or shuffled off. He accordingly took pen in hand, and addressed Washington as follows, on the 23d of January: "The letter which I had the honor to receive yesterday from your Excellency, has relieved me from unspeakable uneasiness. I now anticipate the pleasure it will give you when you discover that what has been conveyed to you for an extract of General Conway's letter to me, was not an information which friendly motives induced a man of honor to give, that injured virtue might be forearmed against secret enemies. The paragraph which your Excellency has condescended to transcribe, is spurious. It was certainly fabricated to answer the most selfish and wicked purposes."

He then goes on to declare that the genuine letter of Conway was perfectly harmless, containing judicious remarks upon the want of discipline in the army, but making no mention of weak generals or bad counsellors. "Particular actions rather than persons were blamed, but with impartiality, and I am convinced he did not aim at lessening, in my opinion, the merit of any person. His letter was perfectly harmless; however, now that various reports have been circulated concerning its contents, they ought not to be submitted to the solemn inspection of those who stand most high in the public esteem.

"Anxiety and jealousy would arise in the breast of very respectable officers, who, sensible of faults which inexperience, and that alone, may have led them into, would be unnecessarily disgusted, if they perceived a probability of such errors being recorded.

"Honor forbids, it and patriotism demands that I should return the letter into the hands of the writer. I will do it; but, at the same time, I declare that the paragraph conveyed to your Excellency as a genuine part of it, was, in words as well as in substance, a wicked forgery.

"About the beginning of December, I was informed that letter had occasioned an explanation between your Excellency and that gentleman. Not knowing whether the whole letter or a part of it had been stealingly copied, but fearing malice had altered its original texture, I own, sir, that a dread of the mischiefs which might attend the forgery, I suspected would be made, put me some time in a most painful situation. When I communicated to the officers in my family the intelligence which I had received, they all entreated me to rescue their characters from the suspicions they justly conceived themselves liable to, until the guilty person should be known. To facilitate the discovery, I wrote to your Excellency; but, unable to learn whether General Conway's letter had been transmitted to you by a member of Congress, or a gentleman in the army, I was afraid much time would be lost in the course of the inquiry, and that the States might receive some capital injury from the infidelity of the person who I thought had stolen a copy of the obnoxious letter. Was it not probable that the secrets of the army might be obtained and betrayed through the same means to the enemy? For this reason, sir, not doubting that Congress would most cheerfully concur with you in tracing out the criminal, I wrote to the president, and enclosed to him a copy of my letter to your Excellency.

"About the time I was forwarding those letters, Brigadier-General Wilkinson returned to Albany. I informed him of the treachery which had been committed, but I concealed from him the measures I was pursuing to unmask the author. Wilkinson answered, he was assured it never would come to light; and endeavored to fix my suspicions on Lieutenant-Colonel Troup,<sup>1</sup> who, he said, might have incautiously conversed on the substance of General Conway's letter with Colonel Hamilton, whom you had sent not long before to Albany. I did not listen to this insinuation against your aide-de-camp and mine."

In the original draft of this letter, which we have seen among the papers of General Gates, he adds, as a reason for not listening to the insinuation, that he considered it even as ungenerous. "But," pursues he, "the light your Excellency has just assisted

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<sup>1</sup> At that time an aide-de-camp of Gates.

me with, exhibiting the many qualifications which are necessarily blended together in the head and heart of General Wilkinson, I would not omit this fact; it will enable your Excellency to judge whether or not he would scruple to make such a forgery as that which he now stands charged with, and ought to be exemplarily punished." This, with considerable more to the same purport, intended to make Wilkinson the scape-goat, stands cancelled in the draft, and was omitted in the letter sent to Washington; but by some means, fair or foul, it came to the knowledge of Wilkinson, who has published it at length in his *Memoirs*, and who, it will be found, resented the imputation thus conveyed.

General Conway, also, in a letter to Washington (dated January 27), informs him that the letter had been returned to him by Gates, and that he found with great satisfaction that "the paragraph so much spoken of did not exist in the said letter, nor any thing like it." He had intended, he adds, to publish the letter, but had been dissuaded by President Laurens and two or three members of Congress, to whom he had shown it, lest it should inform the enemy of a misunderstanding among the American generals. He therefore depended upon the justice, candor, and generosity of General Washington, to put a stop to the forgery.

On the 9th of February, Washington wrote Gates a long and searching reply to his letters of the 8th and 23d of January, analyzing them, and showing how, in spirit and import, they contradicted each other; and how sometimes the same letter contradicted itself. How, in the first letter, the reality of the extracts was by implication allowed, and the only solicitude shown was to find out the person who brought them to light; while, in the second letter, the whole was pronounced, "in word as well as in substance, a wicked forgery." "It is not my intention," observes Washington, "to contradict this assertion, but only to intinate some considerations which tend to induce a supposition, that, though none of General Conway's letters to you contained the offensive passage mentioned, there might have been something in them too nearly related to it, that could give such an extraordinary alarm. If this were not the case, how easy in the first instance to have declared there was nothing exceptionable in them, and to have produced the letters themselves in support of it? The propriety of the objections suggested against submitting them to inspection may very well be questioned. . . . The various reports circulated concerning their contents, were perhaps so many arguments for making

them speak for themselves, to place the matter upon the footing of certainty. Concealment in an affair which had made so much noise, though not by *my* means, will naturally lead men to conjecture the worst, and it will be a subject of speculation even to candor itself. The anxiety and jealousy you apprehend from revealing the letter, will be very apt to be increased by suppressing it."

We forbear to follow Washington through his stern analysis, but we cannot omit the concluding paragraph of his strictures on the character of Conway.

"Notwithstanding the hopeful presages you are pleased to figure to yourself of General Conway's firm and constant friendship to America, I cannot persuade myself to retract the prediction concerning him, which you so emphatically wish had not been inserted in my last. A better acquaintance with him, than I have reason to think you have had, from what you say, and a concurrence of circumstances, oblige me to give him but little credit for the qualifications of his heart, of which, at least, I beg leave to assume the privilege of being a tolerable judge. Were it necessary, more instances than one might be adduced, from his behavior and conversation, to manifest that he is capable of all the malignity of detraction, and all the meanness of intrigue, to gratify the absurd resentment of disappointed vanity, or to answer the purposes of personal aggrandizement, and promote the interest of faction."

Gates evidently quailed beneath this letter. In his reply, February 19, he earnestly hoped that no more of that time, so precious to the public, might be lost upon the subject of General Conway's letter.

"Whether that gentleman," says he, "does or does not deserve the suspicions you express, would be entirely indifferent to me, did he not possess an office of high rank in the army of the United States. As to the gentleman, I have no personal connections with him, nor had I any correspondence previous to his writing the letter which has given offence, nor have I since written to him, save to certify what I know to be the contents of that letter. He, therefore, must be responsible; as I heartily dislike controversy, even upon my own account, and much more in a matter wherein I was only accidentally concerned," etc., etc.

The following was the dignified but freezing note with which Washington closed this correspondence.

“ VALLEY FORGE, 24th Feb., 1778.

“ SIR: — I yesterday received your favor of the 19th instant. I am as averse to controversy as any man ; and, had I not been forced into it, you never would have had occasion to impute to me even the shadow of a disposition towards it. Your repeatedly and solemnly disclaiming any offensive views in those matters which have been the subject of our past correspondence, makes me willing to close with the desire you express of burying them hereafter in silence, and, as far as future events will permit, oblivion. My temper leads me to peace and harmony with all men ; and it is peculiarly my wish to avoid any personal feuds or dissensions with those who are embarked in the same great national interest with myself, as every difference of this kind must, in its consequences, be very injurious. I am, sir,” etc.

Among the various insidious artifices resorted to about this time to injure the character of Washington, and destroy public confidence in his sincerity, was the publication of a series of letters purporting to be from him to some members of his family, and to his agent, Mr. Lund Washington, which, if genuine, would prove him to be hollow-hearted and faithless to the cause he was pretending to uphold. They had appeared in England in a pamphlet form, as if printed from originals and drafts found in possession of a black servant of Washington, who had been left behind ill, at Fort Lee, when it was evacuated. They had recently been reprinted at New York in Rivington's Royal Gazette ; the first letter making its appearance on the 14th of February. It had also been printed at New York in a handbill, and extracts published in a Philadelphia paper.

Washington took no public notice of this publication at the time, but in private correspondence with his friends, he observes : “ These letters are written with a great deal of art. The intermixture of so many family circumstances (which, by the by, want foundation in truth) gives an air of plausibility, which renders the villainy greater ; as the whole is a contrivance to answer the most diabolical purposes. Who the author of them is, I know not. From information or acquaintance he must have had some knowledge of the component parts of my family ; but he has most egregiously mistaken facts in several instances. The design of his labors is as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness.<sup>1</sup> And in another letter, he ob-

<sup>1</sup> Letter to General Henry Lee, Virginia. — *Sparks' Writings of Washington*, vol. v. 378.



serves, "They were written to show that I was an enemy to independence, and with a view to create distrust and jealousy. It is no easy matter to decide whether the villainy or the artifice of these letters is greatest.<sup>1</sup>

The author of these letters was never discovered. He entirely failed in his object; the letters were known at once to be forgeries.<sup>2</sup>

Letters received at this juncture from Lafayette, gave Washington tidings concerning the expedition against Canada, set on foot without consulting him. General Conway had arrived at Albany three days before the marquis, and his first word when they met was that the expedition was quite impossible. Generals Schuyler, Lincoln and Arnold, had written to Conway to that effect. The marquis at first was inclined to hope the contrary, but his hope was soon demolished. Instead of the two thousand five hundred men that had been promised him, not twelve hundred in all were to be found fit for duty, and most part of these were "naked even for a summer's campaign;" all shrank from a winter incursion into so cold a country. As to General Stark and his legion of Green Mountain Boys, who, according to the gasconade of Gates, might have burnt the fleet before Lafayette's arrival, the marquis received at Albany a letter from the veteran, "who wishes to know," says he, "*what number of men, for what time, and for what rendezvous, I desire him to raise.*"

Another officer, who was to have enlisted men, would have done so, *had he received money*. "One asks what encouragement his people will have; the other has no clothes; not one

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Landon Carter. *Sparks' Writings of Washington*, vol. v. p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> The introduction to the letters states them to have been transmitted to England by an officer serving in Delancy's corps of loyalists, who gives the following account of the way he came by them: "Among the prisoners at Fort Lee, I espied a mulatto fellow, whom I thought I recollected, and who confirmed my conjectures by gazing very earnestly at me. I asked him if he knew me. At first he was unwilling to own it; but when he was about to be carried off, thinking, I suppose, that I might perhaps be of some service to him, he came and told me that he was Billy, and the old servant of General Washington. He had been left there on account of an indisposition which prevented his attending his master. I asked him a great many questions, as you may suppose; but found very little satisfaction in his answers. At last, however, he told me that he had a small portmanteau of his master's, of which, when he found that he must be put into confinement, he entreated my care. It contained only a few stockings and shirts; and I could see nothing worth my care, except an almanac, in which he had kept a sort of a journal, or diary of his proceedings since his first coming to New York; there were also two letters from his lady, one from Mr. Custis, and some pretty long ones from Mr. Lund Washington. And in the same bundle with them, the first draughts, or foul copies of answers to them. I read these with avidity; and being highly entertained with them, have shown them to several of my friends, who all agree with me, that he is a very different character from what they had supposed him."

In commenting on the above, Washington observed that his mulatto man Billy, had never been one moment in the power of the enemy, and that no part of his baggage nor any of his attendants were captured during the whole course of the war. — *Letter to Timothy Pickens*, *Sparks*, ix. 149.

of them has received a dollar of what was due to them. I have applied to everybody, I have begged at every door I could, these two days, and I see that I could do something were the expedition to be begun in five weeks. But you know we have not an hour to lose; and, indeed, it is now rather too late had we every thing in readiness."

The poor marquis was in despair—but what most distressed him was the dread of ridicule. He had written to his friends that he had the command of the expedition; it would be known throughout Europe. "I am afraid," says he, "that it will reflect on my reputation, and I shall be laughed at. My fears upon that subject are so strong, that I would choose to become again only a volunteer, unless Congress offers the means of mending this ugly business by some glorious operation."

A subsequent letter is in the same vein. The poor marquis, in his perplexity, lays his whole heart open to Washington with childlike simplicity. "I have written lately to you my distressing, ridiculous, foolish, and indeed nameless situation. I am sent, with a great noise, at the head of an army for doing great things; the whole continent, France and Europe herself and, what is worse, the British army, are in great expectations. How far they will be deceived, how far we shall be ridiculed, you may judge by the candid account you have got of the state of our affairs.—I confess, my dear general, that I find myself of very quick feelings whenever my reputation and glory are concerned in any thing. It is very hard that such a part of my happiness, without which I cannot live, should depend upon schemes which I never knew of but when there was no time to put them in execution. I assure you, my most dear and respected friend, that I am more unhappy than I ever was. . . . I should be very happy if you were here, to give me some advice; but I have nobody to consult with."

Washington, with his considerate, paternal counsels, hastened to calm the perturbation of his youthful friend, and dispel those fears respecting his reputation, excited only, as he observed, "by an uncommon degree of sensibility." "It will be no disadvantage to you to have it known in Europe," writes he, "that you have received so manifest a proof of the good opinion and confidence of Congress as an important detached command. . . . However sensibly your ardor for glory may make you feel this disappointment, you may be assured that your character stands as fair as ever it did, and that no new enterprise is necessary to wipe off this imaginary stain."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks' Writings of Washington, vol. v. p. 300.

The project of an irruption into Canada was at length formally suspended by a resolve of Congress; and Washington was directed to recall the marquis and the Baron de Kalb, the presence of the latter being deemed absolutely necessary to the army at Valley Forge. Lafayette at the same time received assurance of the high sense entertained by Congress of his prudence, activity and zeal, and that nothing was wanting on his part to give the expedition the utmost possible effect.

Gladly the young marquis hastened back to Valley Forge, to enjoy the companionship and find himself once more under the paternal eye of Washington; leaving Conway for the time in command at Albany, "where there would be nothing, perhaps, to be attended to but some disputes of Indians and tories."

Washington, in a letter to General Armstrong, writes, "I shall say no more of the Canada expedition than that it is at an end. I never was made acquainted with a single circumstance relating to it."

## CHAPTER X.

THE TROUBLE ABOUT THE CONWAY LETTER — CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LORD STIRLING AND WILKINSON — WILKINSON'S HONOR WOUNDED — HIS PASSAGE AT ARMS WITH GENERAL GATES — HIS SEAT AT THE BOARD OF WAR UNCOMFORTABLE — DETERMINED THAT LORD STIRLING SHALL BLEED — HIS WOUNDED HONOR HEALED — HIS INTERVIEW WITH WASHINGTON — SEES THE CORRESPONDENCE OF GATES — DENOUNCES GATES AND GIVES UP THE SECRETARYSHIP — IS THROWN OUT OF EMPLOY — CLOSING REMARKS ON THE CONWAY CABAL.

THE Conway letter was destined to be a further source of trouble to the cabal. Lord Stirling, in whose presence at Reading Wilkinson had cited the letter, and who had sent information of it to Washington, was now told that Wilkinson, on being questioned by General Conway, had declared that no such words as those reported, nor any to the same effect, were in the letter.

His lordship immediately wrote to Wilkinson, reminding him of the conversation at Reading, and telling him of what he had recently heard.

"I well know," writes his lordship, "that it is impossible you could have made any such declaration; but it will give great satisfaction to many of your friends to know whether

Conway made such inquiry, and what was your answer; they would also be glad to know what were the words of the letter, and I should be very much obliged to you for a copy of it."

Wilkinson found that his tongue had again brought him into difficulty; but he trusted to his rhetoric, rather than his logic, to get him out of it. He wrote in reply, that he perfectly remembered spending a social day with his lordship at Reading, in which the conversation became general, unreserved and copious; though the tenor of his lordship's discourse, and the nature of their situation, made it confidential. "I cannot, therefore," adds he, logically, "recapitulate particulars, or charge my memory with the circumstances you mention; but, my lord, I disdain low craft, subtlety and evasion, and will acknowledge it is possible, in the warmth of social intercourse, when the mind is relaxed and the heart is unguarded, that observations may have elapsed which have not since occurred to me. On my late arrival in camp, Brigadier-General Conway informed me that he had been charged by General Washington with writing a letter to Major-General Gates, which reflected on the general and the army. The particulars of this charge, which Brigadier-General Conway then repeated, I cannot now recollect. I had read the letter alluded to; I did not consider the information conveyed in his Excellency's letter, as expressed by Brigadier-General Conway, to be literal, and well remember replying to that effect in dubious terms. I had no inducement to stain my veracity were I ever so prone to that infamous vice, as Brigadier Conway informed me he had justified the charge.

"I can scarce credit my senses, when I read the paragraph in which you request an extract from a private letter, which had fallen under my observation. *I have been indiscreet, my lord, but be assured I will not be dishonorable.*"

This communication of Lord Stirling, Wilkinson gives as the first intimation he had received of his being implicated in the disclosure of Conway's letter. When he was subsequently on his way to Yorktown to enter upon his duties as secretary of the Board of War, he learnt at Lancaster that General Gates had denounced him as the betrayer of that letter, and had spoken of him in the grossest language.

"I was shocked by this information," writes he; "I had sacrificed my lineal rank at General Gates's request; I had served him with zeal and fidelity, of which he possessed the strongest evidence; yet he had condemned me unheard for an

act of which I was perfectly innocent, and against which every feeling of my soul revolted with horror. . . . I worshipped honor as the jewel of my soul, and did not pause for the course to be pursued; but I owed it to disparity of years and rank, to former connection and the affections of my own breast, to drain the cup of conciliation and seek an explanation."

The result of these, and other considerations, expressed with that grandiloquence on which Wilkinson evidently prided himself, was a letter to Gates, reminding him of the zeal and devotion with which he had uniformly asserted and maintained his cause; "but, sir," adds he, "in spite of every consideration, you have wounded my honor, and must make acknowledgment or satisfaction for the injury."

"In consideration of our past connection, I descend to that explanation with you which I should have denied any other man. The enclosed letters unmask the villain and evince my innocence. My lord shall bleed for his conduct, but it is proper I first see you."

The letters enclosed were those between him and Lord Stirling, the exposition of which he alleges ought to acquit him of sinister intention, and stamp the report of his lordship to General Washington with palpable falsehood.

Gates writes briefly in reply. "Sir, — The following extract of a letter from General Washington to me will show you how your honor has been called in question; which is all the explanation necessary upon that matter; any other satisfaction you may command."

Then followed the extracts giving the information communicated by Wilkinson to Major McWilliams, Lord Stirling's aide-de-camp.

"After reading the whole of the above extract," adds Gates, "I am astonished, if you really gave Major McWilliams such information, how you could intimate to me that it was *possible* Colonel Troup *had conversed* with Colonel Hamilton upon the subject of General Conway's letter."

According to Wilkinson's story he now proceeded to Yorktown, purposely arriving in the twilight, to escape observation. There he met with an old comrade, Captain Stoddart, recounted to him his wrongs, and requested him to be the bearer of a message to General Gates. Stoddart refused; and warned him that he was running headlong to destruction; "but ruin," observes Wilkinson, "had no terrors for an ardent young man, who prized his honor a thousand fold more than his life, and who was willing to hazard his eternal happiness in its defence."

He accidentally met with another military friend, Lieutenant-Colonel Ball, of the Virginia line, "whose spirit was as independent as his fortune." He willingly became bearer of the following note from Wilkinson to General Gates:

"Sir, — I have discharged my duty to you, and to my conscience; meet me to-morrow morning behind the English church, and I will stipulate the satisfaction which you have promised to grant," etc.

Colonel Ball was received with complaisance by the general. The meeting was fixed for eight o'clock in the morning, with pistols.

At the appointed time Wilkinson and his second, having put their arms in order, were about to sally forth, when Captain Stoddart made his appearance, and informed Wilkinson that Gates desired to speak with him. Where? — In the street near the door. — "The surprise robbed me of circumspection," continues Wilkinson. "I requested Colonel Ball to halt and followed Captain Stoddart. I found General Gates unarmed and alone, and was received with tenderness but manifest embarrassment; he asked me to walk, turned into a back street, and we proceeded in silence till we passed the buildings, when he burst into tears, took me by the hand, and asked me 'how I could think he wished to injure me?' I was too deeply affected to speak, and he relieved my embarrassment by continuing: '*I injure you! it is impossible. I should as soon think of injuring my own child.*' This language," observes Wilkinson, "not only disarmed me, but awakened all my confidence and all my tenderness. I was silent; and he added, 'Besides, there was no cause for injuring you, as Conway acknowledged his letter, and has since said much harder things to Washington's face.'

"Such language left me nothing to require," continues Wilkinson. "It was satisfactory beyond expectation, and rendered me more than content. I was flattered and pleased; and if a third person had doubted the sincerity of the explanation, I would have insulted him."

A change soon came over the spirit of this maudlin scene. Wilkinson attended as secretary at the War Office. "My reception from the president, General Gates," writes he, "did not correspond with his recent professions; he was civil, but barely so, and I was at a loss to account for his coldness, yet had no suspicion of his insincerity."

Wilkinson soon found his situation at the Board of War uncomfortable; and after the lapse of a few days set out for

Valley Forge. On his way thither he met Washington's old friend, Dr. Craik, and learnt from him that his promotion to the rank of brigadier-general by brevet, had been remonstrated against to Congress by forty-seven colonels. He therefore sent in his resignation, not wishing, he said, to hold it, unless he could wear it to the honor and advantage of his country; "and this conduct," adds he, "however repugnant to fashionable ambition, I find consistent with those principles in which I early drew my sword in the present contest."

At Lancaster, Wilkinson, recollecting his resolve that Lord Stirling "should bleed for his conduct," requested his friend, Colonel Moylan, to deliver a "peremptory message" to his lordship. The colonel considered the measure rather precipitate, and suggested that a suitable acknowledgment from his lordship would be a more satisfactory reparation of the wrong than a sacrifice of the life of either of the parties. "There is not in the whole range of my friends, acquaintance, and I might add, in the universe," exclaims Wilkinson, "a man of more sublimated sentiment, or who combined with sound discretion a more punctilious sense of honor, than Colonel Moylan." Taking the Colonel's advice, therefore, he moderated his peremptory message to the following note: "My Lord, — The propriety or impropriety of your communicating to his Excellency any circumstance which passed at your lordship's board at Reading, I leave to be determined by your own feelings and the judgment of the public; but as the affair has eventually induced reflections on my integrity, the sacred duty I owe my honor obliges me to request from your lordship's hand, that the conversation which you have published *passed in a private company during a convivial hour.*"

His lordship accordingly gave it under his hand, that the words passed under such circumstances, but under no injunction of secrecy. Whereupon Wilkinson's irritable but easily pacified honor was appeased, and his sword slept in its sheath.

At Valley Forge Wilkinson had an interview with Washington, in which the subject of General Conway's letter was discussed, and the whole correspondence between Gates and the commander-in-chief laid before him.

"This exposition," writes Wilkinson, "unfolded to me a scene of perfidy and duplicity of which I had no suspicion." It drew from him the following letter to Washington, dated March 28. "I beg you to receive the grateful homage of a sensible mind for your condescension in exposing to me Gen-

eral Gates's letters, which unmask his artifices and efforts to ruin me. The authenticity of the information received through Lord Stirling I cannot confirm, as I solemnly assure your Excellency I do not remember the conversation which passed on that occasion, nor can I recollect particular passages of that letter, as I had but a cursory view of it at a late hour. However, I so well remember its general tenor, that, although General Gates has pledged his word it was a wicked and malicious forgery, I will stake my reputation, if the genuine letter is produced, that words to the same effect will appear."

A few days afterwards, Wilkinson addressed the following letter to the President of Congress.

"SIR,— While I make my acknowledgments to Congress, for the appointment of secretary to the Board of War and Ordnance, I am sorry I should be constrained to resign that office; but, after the acts of *treachery* and *falsehood* in which I have detected Major-General Gates, the president of that board, it is impossible for me to reconcile it to my honor to serve with him."<sup>1</sup>

After recording this letter in his Memoirs, Wilkinson adds: "I had previously resigned my brevet of brigadier-general, on grounds of patriotism; but I still retained my commission of colonel, which was never to my knowledge revoked; yet the dominant influence of General Gates, and the feuds, and factions, and intrigues which prevailed in Congress and in the army of that day, threw me out of employ."—"There we shall leave him; it was a kind of retirement which we apprehend he had richly merited, and we doubt whether his country would have been the loser had he been left to enjoy it for the remainder of his days.

Throughout all the intrigues and manœuvres of the cabal, a part of which we have laid before the reader, Washington had conducted himself with calmness and self-command, speaking on the subject to no one but a very few of his friends, lest a knowledge of those internal dissensions should injure the service.

In a letter to Patrick Henry he gives his closing observations concerning them. "I cannot precisely mark the extent of their views; but it appeared in general, that General Gates was to be exalted on the ruin of my reputation and influence. This I

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<sup>1</sup> Wilkinson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 400.



am authorized to say, from undeniable facts in my own possession, from publications, the evident scope of which could not be mistaken, and from private detractions industriously circulated. General Mifflin, it is commonly supposed, bore the second part in the cabal: and General Conway, I know, was a very active and malignant partisan; but I have good reason to believe that their machinations have recoiled most sensibly upon themselves."

An able and truthful historian, to whose researches we are indebted for most of the documents concerning the cabal, gives it as his opinion that there is not sufficient evidence to prove any concerted plan of action or any fixed design among the leaders; a few aspiring men like Gates and Mifflin, might have flattered themselves with indefinite hopes, and looked forward to a change as promising the best means of aiding their ambitious views; but that it was not probable they had united in any clear or fixed purpose.<sup>1</sup>

These observations are made with that author's usual candor and judgment; yet, wanting as the intrigues of the cabal might be in plan or fixed design, they were fraught with mischief to the public service, inspiring doubts of its commanders and seeking to provoke them to desperate enterprises. They harassed Washington in the latter part of his campaign; contributed to the dark cloud that hung over his gloomy encampment at Valley Forge, and might have effected his downfall, had he been more irascible in his temper, more at the mercy of impulse, and less firmly fixed in the affections of the people. As it was, they only tended to show wherein lay his surest strength. Jealous rivals he might have in the army, bitter enemies in Congress, but the soldiers loved him, and the large heart of the nation always beat true to him.

NOTE. — The following anecdote of the late Governor Jay, one of our purest and most illustrious statesmen, is furnished to us by his son Judge Jay: —

"Shortly before the death of John Adams I was sitting alone with my father, conversing about the American Revolution. Suddenly he remarked, 'Ah, William! the history of that Revolution will never be known. Nobody now alive knows it but John Adams and myself.' Surprised at such a declaration, I asked him to what he referred? He briefly replied, 'The proceedings of the old Congress.' Again I inquired, 'What proceedings?' He answered, 'Those against Washington; from first to last there was a most bitter party against him.'" As the old Congress always sat with closed doors, the public knew no more of what passed within than what it was deemed expedient to disclose.

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks' Writings of Washington. Vol. v. Appendix — where there is a series of documents respecting the Conway Cabal.

## CHAPTER XI.

COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENT — REFORMS IN THE ARMY — SCARCITY IN THE CAMP — THE ENEMY REVEL IN PHILADELPHIA — ATTEMPT TO SURPRISE LIGHT-HORSE HARRY — HIS GALLANT DEFENCE — PRAISED BY WASHINGTON — PROMOTED — LETTER FROM GENERAL LEE — BURGOYNE RETURNS TO ENGLAND — MRS. WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE — BRYAN FAIRFAX VISITS THE CAMP — ARRIVAL OF THE BARON STEUBEN — HIS CHARACTER — DISCIPLINES THE ARMY — GREENE MADE QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

DURING the winter's encampment in Valley Forge, Washington sedulously applied himself to the formation of a new system for the army. At his earnest solicitation Congress appointed a committee of five, called the Committee of Arrangement, to repair to the camp and assist him in the task.<sup>1</sup> Before their arrival he had collected the written opinions and suggestions of his officers on the subject, and from these, and his own observations and experience, had prepared a document exhibiting the actual state of the army, the defects of previous systems, and the alterations and reforms that were necessary. The committee remained three months with him in camp, and then made a report to Congress founded on his statement. The reforms therein recommended were generally adopted. On one point, however, there was much debate. Washington had urged that the pay of the officers was insufficient for their decent subsistence, especially during the actual depreciation of the currency; and that many resignations were the consequence. He recommended not only that their pay should be increased, but that there should be a provision for their future support, by half pay and a pensionary establishment; so as to secure them from being absolutely impoverished in the service of their country.

This last recommendation had to encounter a great jealousy of the army on the part of Congress, and all that Washington could effect by strenuous and unremitted exertions, was a kind of compromise, according to which officers were to receive half pay for seven years after the war, and non-commissioned officers and privates eighty dollars each.

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<sup>1</sup> Names of the committee — General Reed, Nathaniel Folsom, Francis Dana, Charles Carroll, and Gouverneur Morris.

The reforms adopted were slow in going into operation. In the mean time, the distresses of the army continued to increase. The surrounding country for a great distance was exhausted, and had the appearance of having been pillaged. In some places where the inhabitants had provisions and cattle they denied it, intending to take them to Philadelphia, where they could obtain greater prices. The undisturbed communication with the city had corrupted the minds of the people in its vicinage. "This State is sick even unto the death," said Gouverneur Morris.

The parties sent out to forage too often returned empty-handed. "For some days past there has been little less than a famine in the camp," writes Washington, on one occasion. "A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been, ere this, excited by their suffering to a general mutiny and desertion."

The committee, in their report, declared that the want of straw had cost the lives of many of the troops. "Unprovided with this, or materials to raise them from the cold and wet earth, sickness and mortality have spread through their quarters in an astonishing degree. Nothing can equal their sufferings, except the patience and fortitude with which the faithful part of the army endure them." A British historian cites as a proof of the great ascendancy of Washington over his "raw and undisciplined troops," that so many remained with him throughout the winter, in this wretched situation and still more wretched plight; almost naked, often on short allowance, with great sickness and mortality, and a scarcity of medicines, their horses perishing by hundreds from hunger and the severity of the season.

He gives a striking picture of the indolence and luxury which reigned at the same time in the British army in Philadelphia. It is true, the investment of the city by the Americans rendered provisions dear and fuel scanty; but the consequent privations were felt by the inhabitants, not by their invaders. The latter revelled as if in a conquered place. Private houses were occupied without rendering compensation; the officers were quartered on the principal inhabitants, many of whom were of the Society of "Friends;" some even transgressed so far against propriety as to introduce their mistresses into the quarters thus oppressively obtained. The quiet habits of the

city were outraged by the dissolute habits of a camp. Gaming prevailed to a shameless degree. A foreign officer kept a faro bank, at which he made a fortune, and some of the young officers ruined themselves.

"During the whole of this long winter of riot and dissipation," continues the same writer, "Washington was suffered to remain undisturbed at Valley Forge, with an army not exceeding five thousand effective men, and his cannon frozen up and immovable. A nocturnal attack might have forced him to a disadvantageous action or compelled him to a disastrous retreat, leaving behind him his sick, cannon, ammunition and heavy baggage. It might have opened the way for supplies to the city, and shaken off the lethargy of the British army. In a word," adds he, "had General Howe led on his troops to action, victory was in his power and conquest in his train."<sup>1</sup>

Without assenting to the probability of such a result, it is certain that the army for a part of the winter, while it held Philadelphia in siege, was in as perilous a situation as that which kept a bold front before Boston, without ammunition to serve its cannon.

On one occasion there was a flurry at the most advanced post, where Captain Henry Lee (Light-horse Harry) with a few of his troops was stationed. He had made himself formidable to the enemy by harassing their foraging parties. An attempt was made to surprise him. A party of about two hundred dragoons, taking a circuitous route in the night, came upon him by day-break. He had but a few men with him at the time, and took post in a large store-house. His scanty force did not allow a soldier for each window. The dragoons attempted to force their way into the house. There was a warm contest. The dragoons were bravely repulsed, and sheered off, leaving two killed and four wounded. "So well directed was the opposition," writes Lee to Washington, "that we drove them from the stables, and saved every horse. We have got the arms, some cloaks, etc., of their wounded. The enterprise was certainly daring, though the issue of it very ignominious. I had not a soldier for each window."

Washington, whose heart evidently warmed more and more to this young Virginian officer, the son of his "lowland beauty," not content with noticing his exploit in general orders, wrote a note to him on the subject, expressed with unusual familiarity and warmth. "My dear Lee," writes he, "Although I have

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman.

given you my thanks in the general orders of this day, for the late instance of your gallant behavior, I cannot resist the inclination I feel to repeat them again in this manner. I needed no fresh proof of your merit to bear you in remembrance. I waited only for the proper time and season to show it; those I hope are not far off. . . . Offer my sincere thanks to the whole of your gallant party, and assure them, that no one felt pleasure more sensibly, or rejoiced more sincerely for your and their escape, than your affectionate," etc.

In effect, Washington not long afterwards strongly recommended Lee for the command of two troops of horse, with the rank of major, to act as an independent partisan corps. "His genius," observes he, "particularly adapts him to a command of this nature; and it will be the most agreeable to him of any station in which he could be placed."

It was a high gratification to Washington when Congress made this appointment; accompanying it with encomiums on Lee as a brave and prudent officer, who had rendered essential service to the country, and acquired distinguished honor to himself and the corps he commanded.

About the time that Washington was gladdened by the gallantry and good fortune of "Light-horse Harry," he received a letter from another Lee, the captive general, still in the hands of the enemy. It had been written nearly a month previously. "I have the strongest reason to flatter myself," writes Lee, "that you will interest yourself in whatever interests my comfort and welfare. I think it my duty to inform you that my situation is much bettered. It is now five days that I am on my parole. I have the full liberty of the city and its limits; have horses at my command furnished by Sir Henry Clinton and General Robertson; am lodged with two of the oldest and warmest friends I have in the world, Colonel Butler and Colonel Disney of the forty-second regiment. In short, my situation is rendered as easy, comfortable and pleasant as possible, for a man who is in any sort a prisoner."

Washington, in reply, expressed his satisfaction at learning that he was released from confinement, and permitted so many indulgences. "You may rest assured," adds he, "that I feel myself very much interested in your welfare, and that every exertion has been used on my part to effect your exchange. This I have not been able to accomplish. However, from the letters which have lately passed between Sir William Howe and myself, upon the subject of prisoners, I am authorized to expect that you will return in a few days to your friends on parole, as

Major-General Prescott will be sent in on the same terms for that purpose."

Difficulties, however, still occurred; and General Lee and Colonel Ethan Allen were doomed for a few months longer to suffer the annoyance of hope deferred.

The embarkation of General Burgoyne and his troops from Boston, became also a subject of difficulty and delay; it being alleged that some stipulations of the treaty of surrender had not been complied with. After some correspondence, and discussion, it was resolved in Congress that the embarkation should be suspended, until a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention should be properly notified to that body by the court of Great Britain. Burgoyne subsequently obtained permission for his own return to England on parole, on account of ill health.

In the month of February, Mrs. Washington rejoined the general at Valley Forge, and took up her residence at headquarters. The arrangements consequent to her arrival bespeak the simplicity of style in this rude encampment. "The general's apartment is very small," writes she to a friend; "he has had a log cabin built to dine in, which has made our quarters much more tolerable than they were at first."

Lady Stirling, Mrs. Knox, the wife of the general, and the wives of other of the officers were also in the camp. The reforms in the commissariat had begun to operate. Provisions arrived in considerable quantities; supplies, on their way to the Philadelphia market to load the British tables, were intercepted and diverted into the hungry camp of the patriots; magazines were formed in Valley Forge; the threatened famine was averted; "grim-visaged war" gradually relaxed his features, and affairs in the encampment began to assume a more cheering aspect.

In the latter part of the winter, Washington was agreeably surprised by a visit from his old and highly esteemed friend, Bryan Fairfax. That gentleman, although he disapproved of the measures of the British government which had severed the colonies from the mother country, was still firm in allegiance to his king. This had rendered his situation uncomfortable among his former intimates, who were generally embarked in the Revolution. He had resolved, therefore, to go to England, and remain there until the peace. Washington, who knew his integrity and respected his conscientiousness, received him with the warm cordiality of former and happier days; for indeed he brought with him recollections always dear to his heart, of Mount Vernon, and Belvoir, and Virginia life, and the pleas-

ant banks of the Potomac. As Mr. Fairfax intended to embark at New York, Washington furnished him with a passport to that city. Being arrived there, the conscience of Mr. Fairfax prevented him from taking the oaths prescribed, which he feared might sever him from his wife and children, and he obtained permission from the British commander to return to them. On his way home he revisited Washington, and the kindness he again experienced from him, so different from the harshness with which others had treated him, drew from him a grateful letter of acknowledgment after he had arrived in Virginia.

"There are times," said he, "when favors conferred make a greater impression than at others, for, though I have received many, I hope I have not been unmindful of them; yet, that at a time your popularity was at the highest and mine at the lowest, and when it is so common for men's resentments to run high against those who differ from them in opinion, you should act with your wonted kindness towards me, has affected me more than any favor I have received; and could not be believed by some in New York, it being above the run of common minds."<sup>1</sup>

Washington, in reply, expressed himself gratified by the sentiments of his letter, and confident of their sincerity. "The friendship," added he, "which I ever professed and felt for you, met with no diminution from the difference in our political sentiments. I know the rectitude of my own intentions, and believing in the sincerity of yours, lamented, though I did not condemn, your renunciation of the creed I had adopted. Nor do I think any person or power ought to do it, whilst your conduct is not opposed to the general interest of the people and the measures they are pursuing; the latter, that is our actions, depending upon ourselves, may be controlled; while the powers of thinking, originating in higher causes, cannot always be moulded to our wishes."

The most important arrival in the camp was that of the Baron Steuben, towards the latter part of February. He was a seasoned soldier from the old battle-fields of Europe; having served in the seven years' war, been aide-de-camp to the great Frederick, and connected with the quartermaster-general's department. Honors had been heaped upon him in Germany. After leaving the Prussian army he had been grand marshal of

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<sup>1</sup> Bryan Fairfax continued to reside in Virginia until his death, which happened in 1802, at seventy-five years of age. He became proprietor of Belvoir and heir to the family title, but the latter he never assumed. During the latter years of his life he was a clergyman of the Episcopal church.

the court of the Prince of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, colonel in the circle of Suabia, lieutenant-general under the Prince Margrave of Baden, and knight of the Order of Fidelity; and he had declined liberal offers from the King of Sardinia and the Emperor of Austria. With an income of about three thousand dollars, chiefly arising from various appointments, he was living pleasantly in distinguished society at the German courts, and making occasional visits to Paris, when he was persuaded by the Count de St. Germain, French Minister of War, and others of the French cabinet, to come out to America, and engage in the cause they were preparing to befriend. Their object was to secure for the American armies the services of an officer of experience and a thorough disciplinarian. Through their persuasions he resigned his several offices, and came out at forty-eight years of age, a soldier of fortune, to the rude fighting grounds of America, to aid a half-disciplined people in their struggle for liberty. No certainty of remuneration was held out to him, but there was an opportunity for acquiring military glory; the probability of adequate reward should the young republic be successful; and it was hinted that, at all events, the French court would not suffer him to be a loser. As his means, on resigning his offices, were small, Beaumarchais furnished funds for his immediate expenses.

The baron had brought strong letters from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane, our envoys at Paris, and from the Count St. Germain. Landing in Portsmouth in New Hampshire, December 1, he had forwarded copies of his letters to Washington. "The object of my greatest ambition," writes he, "is to render your country all the service in my power, and to deserve the title of a citizen of America by fighting for the cause of your liberty. If the distinguished ranks in which I have served in Europe should be an obstacle, I had rather serve under your Excellency as a volunteer, than to be an object of discontent among such deserving officers as have already distinguished themselves among you."

"I would say, moreover," adds he, "were it not for the fear of offending your modesty, that your Excellency is the only person under whom, after having served under the King of Prussia, I could wish to pursue an art to which I have wholly given myself up."

By Washington's direction, the baron had proceeded direct to Congress. His letters procured him a distinguished reception from the president. A committee was appointed to confer with him. He offered his services as a volunteer:



making no condition for rank or pay, but trusting, should he prove himself worthy and the cause be crowned with success, he would be indemnified for the sacrifices he had made, and receive such further compensation as he might be thought to merit.

The committee having made their report, the baron's proffered services were accepted with a vote of thanks for his disinterestedness, and he was ordered to join the army at Valley Forge. That army, in its ragged condition and squalid quarters, presented a sorry aspect to a strict disciplinarian from Germany, accustomed to the order and appointments of European camps; and the baron declared, that under such circumstances no army in Europe could be kept together for a single month. The liberal mind of Steuben, however, made every allowance; and Washington soon found in him a consummate soldier, free from pedantry or pretension.

The evils arising from a want of uniformity in discipline and manœuvres throughout the army, had long caused Washington to desire a well organized inspectorship. He knew that the same desire was felt by Congress. Conway had been appointed to that office, but had never entered upon its duties. The baron appeared to be peculiarly well qualified for such a department; Washington determined, therefore, to set on foot a temporary institution of the kind. Accordingly he proposed to the baron to undertake the office of inspector-general. The latter cheerfully agreed. Two ranks of inspectors were appointed under him; the lowest to inspect brigades, the highest to superintend several of these. Among the inspectors was a French gentleman of the name of Ternant, chosen not only for his intrinsic merit and abilities, but on account of his being well versed in the English as well as the French language, which made him a necessary assistant to the baron, who, at times, needed an interpreter. The gallant Fleury, to whom Congress had given the rank and pay of lieutenant-colonel, and who had exercised the office of aide-major in France, was soon after employed likewise as an inspector.<sup>1</sup>

In a little while the whole army was under drill; for a great part, made up of raw militia, scarcely knew the manual exercise. Many of the officers, too, knew little of manœuvring, and the best of them had much to learn. The baron furnished his sub-inspectors with written instructions relative to their several functions. He took a company of soldiers

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<sup>1</sup> Washington to the President of Cong. Sparks, v. 347.

under his immediate training, and after he had sufficiently schooled it, made it a model for the others, exhibiting the manœuvres they had to practise.

It was a severe task at first for the aide-de-camp of the great Frederick to operate upon such raw materials. His ignorance of the language, too, increased the difficulty, where manœuvres were to be explained or rectified. He was in despair, until an officer of a New York regiment, Captain Walker, who spoke French, stepped forward and offered to act as interpreter. "Had I seen an angel from Heaven," says the baron, "I could not have been more rejoiced." He made Walker his aide-de-camp, and from that time, had him always at hand.

For a time, there was nothing but drills throughout the camp, then gradually came evolutions of every kind. The officers were schooled as well as the men. The troops, says a person who was present in the camp, were paraded in a single line with shouldered arms; every officer in his place. The baron passed in front, then took the musket of each soldier in hand, to see whether it was clean and well polished, and examined whether the men's accoutrements were in good order.

He was sadly worried for a time with the militia; especially when any manœuvre was to be performed. The men blundered in their exercise; the baron blundered in his English; his French and German were of no avail; he lost his temper, which was rather warm; swore in all three languages at once, which made the matter worse, and at length called his aide to his assistance; to help him curse the blockheads, as it was pretended — but no doubt to explain the manœuvre.<sup>1</sup>

Still the grand marshal of the court of Hohenzollern mingled with the veteran soldier of Frederick, and tempered his occasional bursts of impatience; and he had a kind, generous heart, that soon made him a favorite with the men. His discipline extended to their comforts. He inquired into their treatment by the officers. He examined the doctor's reports; visited the sick; and saw that they were well lodged and attended.

He was an example, too, of the regularity and system he exacted. One of the most alert and indefatigable men in the camp; up at daybreak if not before, whenever there were to

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<sup>1</sup> On one occasion having exhausted all his German and French oaths, he vociferated to his aide-de-camp, Major Walker, "Vien mon ami Walker — vien mon bon ami. Sacra — G — dam de gaucherie of dese badauts — je ne puis plus — I can curse dem no more." — *Carsten, Anecdotes of the Am. War*, p. 341.

be any important manœuvres, he took his cup of coffee and smoked ~~the~~ pipe while his servant dressed his hair, and by sunrise he was in the saddle, equipped at all points, with the star of his order of knighthood glittering on his breast, and was off to the parade, alone, if his suite were not ready to attend him.

The strong good sense of the baron was evinced in the manner in which he adapted his tactics to the nature of the army and the situation of the country, instead of adhering with bigotry to the system of Europe. His instructions were appreciated by all. The officers received them gladly and conformed to them. The men soon became active and adroit. The army gradually acquired a proper organization, and began to operate like a great machine; and Washington found in the baron an intelligent, disinterested, truthful coadjutor, well worthy of the badge he wore as a knight of the Order of *Fidelity*.

Another great satisfaction to Washington, was the appointment by Congress (March 3) of Greene to the office of quartermaster-general; still retaining his rank of major-general in the army. The confusion and derangement of this department during the late campaign, while filled by General Mifflin, had been a source of perpetual embarrassment. That officer, however capable of doing his duty, was hardly ever at hand. The line and the staff were consequently at variance; and the country was plundered in a way sufficient to breed a civil war between the staff and the inhabitants. Washington was often obliged to do the duties of the office himself, until he declared to the Committee of Congress that "he would stand quartermaster no longer."<sup>1</sup> Greene undertook the office with reluctance, and agreed to perform the military duties of it without compensation for the space of a year. He found it in great disorder and confusion, but, by extraordinary exertions and excellent system, so arranged it, as to put the army in a condition to take the field and move with rapidity the moment it should be required.<sup>2</sup> The favor in which Greene stood with the commander-in-chief, was a continual cause of mean jealousy and cavil among the intriguing and the envious; but it arose from the abundant proofs Washington had received in times of trial and difficulty, that he had a brave, affectionate heart, a sound head, and an efficient arm, on all of which he could thoroughly rely.

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence of the Revolution, vol. ii. p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Washington to Greene. — *Writings of Washington*, vol. vii. p. 152.

## CHAPTER XII.

FORTIFICATIONS OF THE HUDSON — PROJECT TO SURPRISE SIR HENRY CLINTON — GENERAL HOWE FORAGES THE JERSEYS — SHIPS AND STORES BURNT AT BORDENTOWN — PLANS FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN — GATES AND MIFFLIN UNDER WASHINGTON'S COMMAND — DOWNFALL OF CONWAY — LORD NORTH'S CONCILIATORY BILLS — SENT TO WASHINGTON BY GOVERNOR TRYON — RESOLVES OF CONGRESS — LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO TRYON — REJOICING AT VALLEY FORGE — THE MISCHIANZA.

THE Highlands of the Hudson had been carefully reconnoitred in the course of the winter by General Putnam, Governor Clinton, his brother James, and several others, and subsequently by a committee from the New York Legislature, to determine upon the most eligible place to be fortified. West Point was ultimately chosen: and Putnam was urged by Washington to have the works finished as soon as possible. The general being called to Connecticut by his private affairs, and being involved in an inquiry to be made into the loss of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, Major-General McDougall was ordered to the Highlands, to take command of the different posts in that department, and to press forward the construction of the works, in which he was to be assisted by Kosciuszko as engineer.

Before General McDougall's arrival, Brigadier-General Parsons had command at West Point. A letter of Washington to the latter suggests an enterprise of a somewhat romantic character. It was no less than to pounce upon Sir Henry Clinton, and carry him off prisoner from his head-quarters in the city of New York. The general was quartered in the Kennedy house near the Battery, and but a short distance from the Hudson. His situation was rather lonely; most of the houses in that quarter having been consumed in the great fire. A retired way led from it through a back yard or garden to the river bank; where Greenwich Street extends at present. The idea of Washington was, that an enterprising party should embark in eight or ten whale-boats at King's Ferry, just below the Highlands, on the first of the ebb, and early in the evening. In six or eight hours, with change of hands, the boats might be rowed under the shadows of the western shore, and approach New York with muffled oars. There were no ships-of-war at that time on that side of the city; all were in the East River. The

officers and men to be employed in the enterprise were to be dressed in red, and much in the style of the British soldiery. Having captured Sir Henry, they might return in their swift whale-boats with the flood tide, or a party of horse might meet them at Fort Lee. "What guards may be at or near his quarters, I cannot say with precision," writes Washington, "and therefore shall not add any thing on this score. But I think it one of the most practicable, and surely it will be among the most desirable and honorable things imaginable to take him prisoner."

The enterprise, we believe, was never attempted. Colonel Hamilton is said to have paralyzed it. He agreed with Washington that there could be little doubt of its success; "but, sir," said he, "have you examined the consequences of it?" "In what respect?" asked the general. "Why," replied Hamilton, "we shall rather lose than gain by removing Sir Henry from the command of the British army, because we perfectly understand his character; and by taking him off we only make way for some other, perhaps an abler officer, whose character and dispositions we have to learn." The shrewd suggestions of his aide-de-camp had their effect on Washington, and the project to abduct Sir Henry was abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

The spring opened without any material alteration in the dispositions of the armies. Washington at one time expected an attack upon his camp; but Sir William was deficient in the necessary enterprise; he contented himself with sending out parties which foraged the surrounding country for many miles, and secured part of the Jerseys, bringing in considerable supplies. These forays were in some instances accompanied by wanton excesses and needless bloodshed; the more unjustifiable, as they met with feeble resistance, especially in the Jerseys, where it was difficult to assemble militia in sufficient force to oppose them.

Another ravaging party ascended the Delaware in flat-bottomed boats and galleys; set fire to public store-houses in Bordentown containing provisions and munitions of war; burnt two frigates, several privateers, and a number of vessels of various classes, some of them laden with military stores. Had the armed vessels been sunk according to the earnest advice of Washington, the greater part of them might have been saved.

A circular letter was sent by Washington on the 20th to all

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<sup>1</sup> *Wilkinson's Memoirs*, vol. 1. p. 852.

the general officers in camp, requesting their opinions in writing, which of three plans to adopt for the next campaign: to attempt the recovery of Philadelphia; to transfer the war to the north and make an attempt on New York; or to remain quiet in a secure and fortified camp, disciplining and arranging the army until the enemy should begin their operations; then to be governed by circumstances.

Just after the issue of this circular, intelligence received from Congress showed that the ascendancy of the cabal was at an end. By a resolution of that body on the 15th, Gates was directed to resume the command of the Northern department, and to proceed forthwith to Fishkill for that purpose. He was invested with powers for completing the works on the Hudson, and authorized to carry on operations against the enemy should any favorable opportunity offer, for which purpose he might call for the artificers and militia of New York and the Eastern States: but he was not to undertake any expedition against New York without previously consulting the commander-in-chief. Washington was requested to assemble a council of major-generals to determine upon a plan of operations, and Gates and Mifflin, by a subsequent resolution, were ordered to attend that council. This arrangement, putting Gates under Washington's order, evinced the determination of Congress to sustain the latter in his proper authority.

Washington in a reply to the President of Congress, who had informed him of this arrangement, mentioned the circular he had just issued. "There is not a moment to be delayed," observed he, "in forming some general system, and I only wait the arrival of Generals Gates and Mifflin to summon a council for the purpose." The next day (24th) he addressed a letter to Gates, requesting him, should he not find it inconvenient, to favor him with a call at the camp, to discuss the plan of operations for the campaign. A similar invitation was sent by him to Mifflin; who eventually resumed his station in the line.

And here we may note the downfall of the intriguing individual who had given his name to the now extinguished cabal.

Conway, after the departure of Lafayette and De Kalb from Albany, had remained but a short time in the command there, being ordered to join the army under General McDougall, stationed at Fishkill. Thence he was soon ordered back to Albany, whereupon he wrote an impertinent letter to the President of Congress, complaining that he was "boxed about in a most indecent manner."

"What is the meaning," demanded he, "of removing me

from the scene of action on the opening of the campaign? I did not deserve this burlesque disgrace, and my honor will not permit me to bear it." In a word, he intimated a wish that the president would make his resignation acceptable to Congress.

To his surprise and consternation, his resignation was immediately accepted. He instantly wrote to the president, declaring that his meaning had been misapprehended; and accounting for it by some orthographical or grammatical faults in his letter, being an Irishman, who had learnt his English in France. "I had no thoughts of resigning," adds he, "while there was a prospect of firing a single shot, and especially at the beginning of a campaign which in my opinion will be a very hot one."

All his efforts to get reinstated were unavailing, though he went to Yorktown to make them in person. "Conway's appointment to the inspectorship of the army, with the rank of major-general, after he had insulted the commander-in-chief," observes Wilkinson, "was a splenetic measure of a majority of Congress, as factious as it was ill-judged."

They had become heartily ashamed of it; especially as it had proved universally unpopular. The office of inspector-general with the rank of major-general, with the proper pay and appointments, were, at Washington's recommendation, voted by them on the 6th of May to Baron Steuben, who had already performed the duties in so satisfactory a manner.

NOTE.—As General Conway takes no further part in the events of this history, we shall briefly dispose of him. Disappointed in his aims, he became irritable in his temper, and offensive in his manners, and frequently indulged in acrimonious language respecting the commander-in-chief, that was highly resented by the army. In consequence of some dispute he became involved in a duel with General John Cadwalader, in which he was severely wounded. Thinking his end approaching, he addressed the following penitential letter to Washington.

PHILADELPHIA, 23 July, 1778.

SIR:—I find myself just able to hold the pen during a few minutes, and take this opportunity of expressing my sincere grief for having done, written, or said any thing disagreeable to your Excellency. My career will soon be over, therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration, and esteem of these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.

I am, with the greatest respect, etc.,

THOMAS CONWAY.

Contrary to all expectation, he recovered from his wound; but, finding himself without rank in the army, covered with public opprobrium, and his very name become a by-word, he abandoned a country in which he had dishonored himself, and embarked for France in the course of the year.

The capture of Burgoyne and his army was now operating with powerful effect on the cabinets of both England and France. With the former it was coupled with the apprehension that France was about to espouse the American cause. The consequence was Lord North's "Conciliatory Bills," as they were called, submitted by him to Parliament, and passed with but slight opposition. One of these bills regulated taxation in the American colonies, in a manner which, it was trusted, would obviate every objection. The other authorized the appointment of commissioners clothed with powers to negotiate with the existing governments; to proclaim a cessation of hostilities; to grant pardons, and to adopt other measures of a conciliatory nature.

"If what was now proposed was a right measure," observes a British historian, "it ought to have been adopted at first, and before the sword was drawn; on the other hand, if the claims of the mother country over her colonies were originally worth contending for, the strength and resources of the nation were not yet so far exhausted as to justify ministers in relinquishing them without a further struggle."<sup>1</sup>

Intelligence that a treaty between France and the United States had actually been concluded at Paris, induced the British minister to hurry off a draft of the bills to America, to forestall the effects of the treaty upon the public mind. General Tryon caused copies of it to be printed in New York and circulated through the country. He sent several of them to General Washington, 15th April, with a request that they should be communicated to the officers and privates of his army. Washington felt the singular impertinence of the request. He transmitted them to Congress, observing that the time to entertain such overtures was past. "Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war. The injuries we have received from the British nation were so unprovoked, and have been so great and so many, that they can never be forgotten." These and other objections advanced by him met with the concurrence of Congress, and it was unanimously resolved that no conference could be held, no treaty made with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, until that power should have withdrawn its fleets and armies, or acknowledged in positive and express terms the independence of the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman.



On the following day, April 23, a resolution was passed recommending to the different States to pardon, under such restrictions as might be deemed expedient, such of their citizens as, having levied war against the United States, should return to their allegiance before the 16th of June. Copies of this resolution were struck off in English and German, and enclosed by Washington in a letter to General Tryon, in which he indulged in a vein of grave irony.

"SIR, — Your letter of the 17th and a triplicate of the same were duly received. I had the pleasure of seeing the drafts of the two bills, before those which were sent by you came to hand; and I can assure you they were suffered to have a free currency among the officers and men under my command, in whose fidelity to the United States I have the most perfect confidence. The enclosed Gazette, published the 24th at Yorktown, will show you that it is the wish of Congress that they should have an unrestrained circulation.<sup>1</sup>

"I take the liberty to transmit to you a few printed copies of a resolution of Congress of the 23d instant, and to request that you will be instrumental in communicating its contents, so far as it may be in your power, to the persons who are the objects of its operations. The benevolent purpose it is intended to answer will, I persuade myself, sufficiently recommend it to your candor. I am, Sir," etc.

The tidings of the capitulation of Burgoyne had been equally efficacious in quickening the action of the French cabinet. The negotiations, which had gone on so slowly as almost to reduce our commissioners to despair, were brought to a happy termination, and on the 2d of May, ten days after the passing by Congress of the resolves just cited, a messenger arrived express from France with two treaties, one of amity and commerce, the other of defensive alliance, signed in Paris on the 6th of February by M. Girard on the part of France, and by Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee on the part of the United States. This last treaty stipulated that, should war ensue between France and England, it should be made a common cause by the contracting parties, in which neither should make truce or peace with Great Britain without the consent of

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<sup>1</sup> In the Gazette of that date the Conciliatory Bills were published by order of Congress: as an instance of their reception by the public, we may mention that in Rhode Island the populace burned them under the gallows.

the other, nor either lay down their arms until the independence of the United States was established.

These treaties were unanimously ratified by Congress, and their promulgation was celebrated by public rejoicings throughout the country. The 6th of May was set apart for a military fête at the camp at Valley Forge. The army was assembled in best array; there was solemn thanksgiving by the chaplains at the head of each brigade; after which a grand parade, a national discharge of thirteen guns, a general *feu de joie*, and shouts of the whole army, "Long live the King of France—Long live the friendly European powers—Huzza for the American States." A banquet succeeded, at which Washington dined in public with all the officers of his army, attended by a band of music. Patriotic toasts were given and heartily cheered. "I never was present," writes a spectator, "where there was such unfeigned and perfect joy as was discovered in every countenance. Washington retired at five o'clock, on which there was universal huzzaing and clapping of hands—'Long live General Washington.' The non-commissioned officers and privates followed the example of their officers as he rode past their brigades. The shouts continued till he had proceeded a quarter of a mile, and a thousand hats were tossed in the air. Washington and his suite turned round several times and cheered in reply." Gates and Mifflin, if in the camp at the time, must have seen enough to convince them that the commander-in-chief was supreme in the affections of the army.

On the 8th, the council of war, ordered by Congress, was convened; at which were present Major-Generals Gates, Greene, Stirling, Mifflin, Lafayette, De Kalb, Armstrong and Steuben and Brigadier-Generals Knox and Duportail. After the state of the forces, British and American, their number and distribution, had been laid before the council by the commander-in-chief, and a full discussion had been held, it was unanimously determined to remain on the defensive, and not attempt any offensive operation until some opportunity should occur to strike a successful blow. General Lee was not present at the council, but afterwards signed the decision.

While the Conciliatory Bills failed thus signally of their anticipated effect upon the Congress and people of the United States, they were regarded with indignation by the royal forces in America, as offering a humiliating contrast to the high and arrogant tone hitherto indulged towards the "rebels." They struck dismay too into the hearts of the American royalists and

refugees; who beheld in them sure prognostics of triumph to the cause they had opposed, and of mortification and trouble, if not of exile, to themselves.

The military career of Sir William Howe in the United States was now drawing to a close. His conduct of the war had given much dissatisfaction in England. His enemies observed that every thing gained by the troops was lost by the general; that he had suffered an enemy with less than four thousand men to reconquer a province which he had recently reduced, and lay a kind of siege to his army in their winter quarters;<sup>1</sup> and that he had brought a sad reverse upon the British arms by failing to co-operate vigorously and efficiently with Burgoyne.

Sir William, on his part, had considered himself slighted by the ministry; his suggestions, he said, were disregarded, and the re-enforcements withheld which he considered indispensable for the successful conduct of the war. He had therefore tendered his resignation, which had been promptly accepted, and Sir Henry Clinton ordered to relieve him. Clinton arrived in Philadelphia on the 8th of May, and took command of the army on the 11th.

Sir William Howe was popular among the officers of his army, from his open and engaging manners; and, perhaps, from the loose rule which indulged them in their social excesses. A number of them combined to close his inglorious residence in Philadelphia by a still more inglorious pageant. It was called the MISCHIANZA (or Medley), a kind of regatta and tournament; the former on the Delaware, the latter at a country-seat on its banks.

The regatta was in three divisions; each with its band of music, to which the oarsmen kept time.

The river was crowded with boats, which were kept at a distance from the squadrons of gayly decorated barges, and the houses, balconies and wharves along the shore, were filled with spectators.

We forbear to give the fulsome descriptions of the land part of the Mischianza furnished by various pens; and will content ourselves with the following, from the pen of a British writer who was present. It illustrates sufficiently the absurdity of the scene.

“All the colors of the army were placed in a grand avenue three hundred feet in length, lined with the king's troops, be-

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman, vol. i. p. 384.

tween two triumphal arches, for the two brothers, the Admiral Lord Howe and the General Sir William Howe, to march along in pompous procession, followed by a numerous train of attendants, with seven silken Knights of the Blended Rose, and seven more of the Burning Mountain, and fourteen damsels dressed in the Turkish fashion, to an area of one hundred and fifty yards square, lined also with the king's troops; for the exhibition of a tilt and tournament, or mock fight of old chivalry, in honor of those two heroes. On the top of each triumphal arch was a figure of Fame bespangled with stars, blowing from her trumpet, in letters of light, *Tes lauriers sont immortels* (Thy laurels are immortal)." On this occasion, according to the same writer, "men compared the importance of Sir William's service with the merit he assumed, and the gravity with which he sustained the most excessive praise and adulation."

The unfortunate Major André, at that time a captain, was very efficient in getting up this tawdry and somewhat effeminate pageant. He had promoted private theatricals during the winter, and aided in painting scenery and devising decorations. He wrote a glowing description of the Mischianza, in a letter to a friend, pronouncing it as perhaps the most splendid entertainment ever given by any army to their general. He figured in it as one of the Knights of the Blended Rose. In a letter written to a lady, in the following year, he alludes to his preparations for it as having made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her supplies in that department.

At the time of this silken and mock heroic display, the number of British chivalry in Philadelphia was nineteen thousand five hundred and thirty, cooped up in a manner by an American force at Valley Forge, amounting, according to official returns, to eleven thousand eight hundred men. Could any triumphal pageant be more ill-placed and ill-timed!

## CHAPTER XIII.

LAFAYETTE DETACHED TO KEEP WATCH ON PHILADELPHIA — HIS POSITION AT BARREN HILL — PLAN OF SIR HENRY TO ENTRAP HIM — WASHINGTON ALARMED FOR HIS SAFETY — STRATAGEM OF THE MARQUIS — EXCHANGE OF GENERAL LEE AND COLONEL ETHAN ALLAN — ALLEN AT VALLEY FORGE — WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF HIM — PREPARATIONS IN PHILADELPHIA TO EVACUATE — WASHINGTON'S MEASURES IN CONSEQUENCE — ARRIVAL OF COMMISSIONERS FROM ENGLAND — THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT — THEIR PROCEEDINGS — THEIR FAILURE — THEIR MANIFESTO.

Soon after Sir Henry Clinton had taken the command, there were symptoms of an intention to evacuate Philadelphia. Whither the enemy would thence direct their course was a matter of mere conjecture. Lafayette was therefore detached by Washington, with twenty-one hundred chosen men and five pieces of cannon, to take a position nearer the city, where he might be at hand to gain information, watch the movements of the enemy, check their predatory excursions, and fall on their rear when in the act of withdrawing.

The marquis crossed the Schuylkill on the 18th of May, and proceeded to Barren Hill, about half way between Washington's camp and Philadelphia, and about eleven miles from both. Here he planted his cannon facing the south, with rocky ridges bordering the Schuylkill on his right; woods and stone houses on his left. Behind him the roads forked, one branch leading to Matson's Ford of the Schuylkill, the other by Swedes' Ford to Valley Forge. In advance of his left wing was McLane's company and about fifty Indians. Pickets and videttes were placed in the woods to the south, through which the roads led to Philadelphia, and a body of six hundred Pennsylvania militia were stationed to keep watch on the roads leading to White Marsh.

In the mean time Sir Henry Clinton, having received intelligence through his spies of this movement of Lafayette, concerted a plan to entrap the young French nobleman. Five thousand men were sent out at night, under General Grant, to make a circuitous march by White Marsh, and get in the rear of the Americans; another force under General Grey was to cross to the west side of the Schuylkill, and take post below Barren Hill, while Sir Henry in person was to lead a third division along the Philadelphia road.

The plan came near being completely successful, through the remissness of the Pennsylvania militia, who had left their post of observation. Early in the morning, as Lafayette was conversing with a young girl, who was to go to Philadelphia and collect information, under pretext of visiting her relatives, word was brought that red coats had been descried in the woods near White Marsh. Lafayette was expecting a troop of American dragoons in that quarter, who wore scarlet uniforms, and supposed these to be them; to be certain, however, he sent out an officer to reconnoitre. The latter soon came spurring back at full speed. A column of the enemy had pushed forward on the road from White Marsh, were within a mile of the camp, and had possession of the road to Valley Forge. Another column was advancing on the Philadelphia road. In fact, the young French general was on the point of being surrounded by a greatly superior force.

Lafayette saw his danger, but maintained his presence of mind. Throwing out small parties of troops to show themselves at various points of the intervening wood, as if an attack on Grant was meditated, he brought that general to a halt, to prepare for action, while he with his main body pushed forward for Matson's Ford on the Schuylkill.

The alarm-guns at sunrise had apprised Washington that the detachment under Lafayette was in danger. The troops at Valley Forge were instantly under arms. Washington, with his aides-de-camp and some of his general officers, galloped to the summit of a hill, and anxiously reconnoitred the scene of action with a glass. His solicitude for the marquis was soon relieved. The stratagem of the youthful warrior had been crowned with success. He completely gained the march upon General Grant, reached Matson's Ford in safety, crossed it in great order, and took a strong position on high grounds which commanded it. The enemy arrived at the river just in time for a skirmish as the artillery was crossing. Seeing that Lafayette had extricated himself from their hands, and was so strongly posted, they gave over all attack, and returned somewhat disconcerted to Philadelphia; while the youthful marquis rejoined the army at Valley Forge, where he was received with acclamations.

The exchange of General Lee for General Prescott, so long delayed by various impediments, had recently been effected; and Lee was reinstated in his position of second in command. Colonel Ethan Allen, also, had been released from his long captivity in exchange for Colonel Campbell. Allen paid a visit to the camp at Valley Forge, where he had much to tell of his

various vicissitudes and hardships. Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress suggesting that something should be done for Allen, observes: "His fortitude and firmness seem to have placed him out of the reach of misfortune. There is an original something about him that commands admiration, and his long captivity and sufferings have only served to increase, if possible, his enthusiastic zeal. He appears very desirous of rendering his services to the States, and of being employed; and at the same time, he does not discover any ambition for high rank."

In a few days, a brevet commission of colonel arrived for Allen; but he had already left camp for his home in Vermont, where he appears to have hung up his sword; for we meet with no further achievements by him on record.

Indications continued to increase of the departure of troops from Philadelphia. The military quarters were in a stir and bustle; effects were packed up; many sold at auction; baggage and heavy cannon embarked; transports fitted up for the reception of horses, and hay taken on board. Was the whole army to leave the city, or only a part? The former was probable. A war between France and England appeared to be impending: in that event, Philadelphia would be an ineligible position for the British army.

New York, it was concluded, would be the place of destination; either as a rendezvous, or a post whence to attempt the occupation of the Hudson. Would they proceed thither by land or water? Supposing the former, Washington would gladly have taken post in Jersey, to oppose or harass them, on their march through that State. His camp, however, was encumbered by upwards of three thousand sick; and covered a great amount of military stores. He dared not weaken it by detaching a sufficient force; especially as it was said the enemy intended to attack him before their departure.

For three weeks affairs remained in this state. Washington held his army ready to march towards the Hudson at a moment's warning; and sent General Maxwell with a brigade of Jersey troops, to co-operate with Major-General Dickinson and the militia of that State, in breaking down the bridges and harassing the enemy, should they actually attempt to march through it. At the same time he wrote to General Gates, who was now at his post on the Hudson, urging him to call in as large a force of militia as he could find subsistence for, and to be on the alert for the protection of that river.

In the mean time, the commissioners empowered under the

new Conciliatory Bills to negotiate the restoration of peace between Great Britain and her former colonies, arrived in the Delaware in the Trident ship-of-war. These were Frederick Howard, Earl of Carlisle; William Eden (afterwards Lord Auckland), brother of the last colonial governor of Maryland; and George Johnstone, sometimes called commodore, from having served in the navy, but more commonly known as Governor Johnstone, having held that office in Florida. He was now a member of Parliament, and in the opposition. Their secretary was the celebrated Dr. Adam Ferguson, an Edinburgh professor; author of a Roman History, and who in his younger days (he was now about fifty-five years of age) had been a "fighting chaplain at Fontenoy."

The choice of commissioners gave rise to much criticism and cavil; especially that of Lord Carlisle, a young man of fashion, amiable and intelligent, it is true, but unfitted by his soft European habits for such a mission. "To captivate the rude members of Congress," said Wilkes, "and civilize the wild inhabitants of an unpolished country, a noble peer was very properly appointed chief of the honorable embassy. His lordship, to the surprise and admiration of that part of the New World, carried with him a green ribbon, the gentle manners, winning behavior, and soft insinuating address of a modern man of quality and a professed courtier. The muses and graces with a group of little laughing loves were in his train, and for the first time crossed the Atlantic."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Eden, by his letter still in existence,<sup>2</sup> appears to have been unkindly disposed towards America. Johnstone was evidently the strongest member of the commission. Fox pronounced him "the only one who could have the ear of the people in America," he alone had been their friend in Great Britain, and was acquainted with the people of Pennsylvania.

The commissioners landed at Philadelphia on the 6th of June, and discovered, to their astonishment, that they had come out, as it were, in the dark, on a mission in which but a half confidence had been reposed in them by government. Three weeks before their departure from England, orders had been sent out to Sir Henry Clinton to evacuate Philadelphia and concentrate his forces at New York; yet these orders were never imparted to them. Their letters and speeches testify their surprise and indignation at finding their plan of operations so completely disconcerted by their own cabinet. "We found every thing

<sup>1</sup> 19 Parliamentary Hist. 1338.

<sup>2</sup> Force's Am. Archives, vol. 1. 962.



here," writes Lord Carlisle, "In great confusion; the army upon the point of leaving the town, and about three thousand of the miserable inhabitants embarked on board of our ships, to convey them from a place where they think they would receive no mercy from those who will take possession after us."

So Governor Johnstone, in speeches subsequently made in Parliament: "On my arrival, the orders for the evacuation had been made public—the city was in the utmost consternation: a more affecting spectacle of woe I never beheld." And again: "The commissioners were received at Philadelphia with all the joy which a generous people could express. Why were you so long a-coming? was the general cry. Do not abandon us. Retain the army and send them against Washington, and the affair is over. Ten thousand men will arm for you in this province, and ten thousand in the lower counties, the moment you take the field and can get arms. The declarations were general and notorious, and I am persuaded, if we had been at liberty to have acted in the field, our most sanguine expectations would have been fulfilled."

The orders for evacuation, however, were too peremptory to be evaded, but Johnstone declared that if he had known of them, he never would have gone on the mission. The commissioners had prepared a letter for Congress, merely informing that body of their arrival and powers, and their disposition to promote a reconciliation, intending quietly to await an answer; but the unexpected situation of affairs occasioned by the order for evacuation, obliged them to alter their resolution, and to write one of a different character, bringing forward at once all the powers delegated to them.

On the 9th June, Sir Henry Clinton informed Washington of the arrival of the commissioners, and requested a passport for their secretary, Dr. Ferguson, the historian, to proceed to Yorktown bearing a letter to Congress. Washington sent to Congress a copy of Sir Henry's letter, but did not consider himself at liberty to grant the passport until authorized by them.

Without waiting the result, the commissioners forwarded, by the ordinary military post, their letter, accompanied by the "Conciliatory Acts" and other documents. They were received by Congress on the 13th. The letter of the commissioners was addressed "to his Excellency, Henry Laurens, the President and others, the members of Congress." The reading of the letter was interrupted; and it came near being indignantly rejected, on account of expressions disrespectful to

France; charging it with being the insidious enemy of both England and her colonies, and interposing its pretended friendship to the latter "only to prevent reconciliation and prolong this destructive war." Several days elapsed before the Congress recovered sufficient equanimity to proceed with the despatches of the commissioners, and deliberate on the propositions they contained.

In their reply, signed by the president (June 17), they observed, that nothing but an earnest desire to spare further effusion of blood, could have induced them to read a paper containing expressions so disrespectful to his most Christian Majesty, or to consider propositions so derogatory to the honor of an independent nation; and in conclusion, they expressed a readiness to treat as soon as the King of Great Britain should demonstrate a sincere disposition for peace, either by an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of the States, or by the withdrawal of his fleets and armies.

We will not follow the commissioners through their various attempts, overtly and covertly, to forward the object of their mission. We cannot, however, pass unnoticed an intimation conveyed from Governor Johnstone to General Joseph Reed, at this time an influential member of Congress, that effectual services on his part to restore the union of the two countries might be rewarded by ten thousand pounds sterling, and any office in the colonies in His Majesty's gift. To this, Reed made his brief and memorable reply: "I am not worth purchasing; but such as I am, the King of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it."

A letter was also written by Johnstone to Robert Morris, the celebrated financier, then also a member of Congress, containing the following significant paragraph: "I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America incapable of being influenced by improper motives; but in all such transactions there is risk; and I think that whoever ventures, should be assured, at the same time, that honor and emolument should naturally follow the fortune of those who have steered the vessel in the storm and brought her safely into port. I think Washington and the President have a right to every favor that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interest, and spare the miseries and devastation of war."

These transactions and letters being communicated to Congress, were pronounced by them daring and atrocious attempts to corrupt their integrity, and they resolved that it was incompatible with their honor to hold any correspondence or intercourse with the commissioner who made it; especially to

negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty was concerned.

The commissioners, disappointed in their hopes of influencing Congress, attempted to operate on the feelings of the public, at one time by conciliatory appeals, at another by threats and denunciations. Their last measure was to publish a manifesto recapitulating their official proceedings; stating the refusal of Congress to treat with them, and offering to treat within forty days with deputies from all or any of the colonies or provincial Assemblies; holding forth, at the same time, the usual offers of conditional amnesty. This measure, like all which had preceded it, proved ineffectual; the commissioners embarked for England, and so terminated this tardy and blundering attempt of the British Government and its agents to effect a reconciliation — the last attempt that was made.

Lord Carlisle, who had taken the least prominent part in these transactions, thus writes in the course of them to his friend the witty George Selwyn, and his letter may serve as a peroration. "I enclose you our manifesto, which you will never read. 'Tis a sort of dying speech of the commission; an effort from which I expect little success. . . . Every thing is upon a great scale upon this continent. The rivers are immense; the climate violent in heat and cold; the prospects magnificent; the thunder and lightning tremendous. The disorders incident to the country make every constitution tremble. We have nothing on a great scale with us but our blunders, our misconduct, our ruin, our losses, our disgraces and misfortunes, that will mark the reign of a prince, who deserves better treatment and kinder fortunes."

## CHAPTER XIV.

PREPARATIONS TO EVACUATE PHILADELPHIA — WASHINGTON CALLS A COUNCIL OF WAR — LEE OPPOSED TO ANY ATTACK — PHILADELPHIA EVACUATED — MOVEMENTS IN PURSUIT OF SIR HENRY CLINTON — ANOTHER COUNCIL OF WAR — CONFLICT OF OPINIONS — CONTRADICTORY CONDUCT OF LEE RESPECTING THE COMMAND — THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH COURT-HOUSE — SUBSEQUENT MARCH OF THE ARMIES.

THE delay of the British to evacuate Philadelphia tasked the sagacity of Washington, but he supposed it to have been caused by the arrival of the commissioners from Great Britain.

The force in the city in the mean time had been much reduced. Five thousand men had been detached to aid in a sudden descent on the French possessions in the West Indies; three thousand more to Florida. Most of the cavalry with other troops had been shipped with the provision train and heavy baggage to New York. The effective force remaining with Sir Henry was now about nine or ten thousand men; that under Washington was a little more than twelve thousand Continentals, and about thirteen hundred militia. It had already acquired considerable proficiency in tactics and field manoeuvring under the diligent instructions of Steuben.

Early in June, it was evident that a total evacuation of the city was on the point of taking place; and circumstances convinced Washington that the march of the main body would be through the Jerseys. Some of his officers thought differently, especially General Lee, who had now the command of a division composed of Poor, Varnum, and Huntington's brigades. Lee, since his return to the army had resumed somewhat of his old habit of cynical supervision, and had his circle of admirers, among whom he indulged in caustic comments on military affairs and the merits of commanders.

On the present occasion he addressed a letter to Washington, dated June 15, suggesting other plans which the enemy might have in view. "Whether they do or do not adopt any of these plans," added he, "there can be no inconvenience arise from considering the subject, nor from devising means of defeating their purpose, on the supposition that they will."

Washington, in his reply, gave the suggestions of Lee a candid and respectful consideration, but in the course of his letter took occasion to hint a little gentle admonition.

"I shall always be happy," writes he, "in a free communication of your sentiments upon any important subject relative to the service, and only beg that they may come directly to myself. The custom which many officers have, of speaking freely, and reprobating measures, which, upon investigation, may be found to be unavoidable, is never productive of good, but often of very mischievous consequences."

In consequence probably of the suggestions of Lee, Washington called a general council of war, on the 17th, to consider what measures to adopt; whether to undertake any enterprise against the enemy in their present circumstances — whether the army should remain in its actual position, until the final evacuation had taken place, or move immediately towards the Delaware — whether, should the enemy march through the Jerseys it

would be advisable to attack them while on the way, or to push on directly to the Hudson, and secure that important communication between the Eastern and Southern States? In case an attack while on the march were determined on, should it be a partial or a general one?

Lee spoke eloquently on the occasion. He was opposed to an attack of any kind. He would make a bridge of gold for the enemy. They were nearly equal in number to the Americans, and far superior in discipline; in fact, never had troops been better disciplined. An attack would endanger the safety of the cause. It was now in a prosperous state, in consequence of the foreign alliance just formed; all ought not to be put at risk at the very moment of making such an alliance. He advised merely to follow the enemy, observe their motions, and prevent them from committing any excesses.

Lee's opinions had still great weight with the army; most of the officers, both foreign and American, concurred with him. Greene, Lafayette, Wayne, and Cadwalader, thought differently. They could not brook that the enemy should evacuate the city, and make a long march through the country unmolested. An opportunity might present itself, amid the bustle and confusion of departure, or while embarrassed in defiles with a cumbrous baggage train, of striking some signal blow, that would indemnify them for all they had suffered in their long and dreary encampment at Valley Forge.

Washington's heart was with this latter counsel; but seeing such want of unanimity among his generals, he requested their opinions in writing. Before these were given in, word was brought that the enemy had actually evacuated the city.

Sir Henry had taken his measures with great secrecy and despatch. The army commenced moving at three o'clock on the morning of the 18th, retiring to a point of land below the town formed by the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill, and crossing the former river in boats. By ten o'clock in the morning the rear-guard landed on the Jersey shore.

On the first intelligence of this movement, Washington detached General Maxwell with his brigade, to co-operate with General Dickinson and the New Jersey militia in harassing the enemy on their march. He sent General Arnold, also, with a force to take command of Philadelphia, that officer being not yet sufficiently recovered from his wound for field service; then breaking up his camp at Valley Forge, he pushed forward with his main force in pursuit of the enemy.

As the route of the latter lay along the eastern bank of the

Delaware as high as Trenton, Washington was obliged to make a considerable circuit, so as to cross the river higher up at Coryell's Ferry, near the place where, eighteen months previously, he had crossed to attack the Hessians.

On the 20th, he writes to General Gates: "I am now with the main body of the army within ten miles of Coryell's Ferry. General Lee is advanced with six brigades, and will cross to-night or to-morrow morning. By the last intelligence the enemy are near Mount Holly, and moving very slowly; but as there are so many roads open to them, their route could not be ascertained. I shall enter the Jerseys to-morrow, and give you the earliest notice of their movements, and whatever may affect you."

Heavy rains and sultry summer heat retarded his movements; but the army crossed on the 24th. The British were now at Moorestown and Mount Holly. Thence they might take the road on the left for Brunswick, and so on to Staten Island and New York; or the road to the right through Monmouth, by the heights of Middletown to Sandy Hook. Uncertain which they might adopt, Washington detached Colonel Morgan with six hundred picked men to re-enforce Maxwell, and hang on their rear: while he himself pushed forward with the main body towards Princeton, cautiously keeping along the mountainous country to the left of the most northern road.

The march of Sir Henry was very slow. His army was encumbered with baggage and provisions, and all the nameless superfluities in which British officers are prone to indulge. His train of wheel carriages and bat horses was twelve miles in extent. He was retarded by heavy rain and intolerable heat; bridges had to be built and causeways constructed over streams and marshes, where they had been destroyed by the Americans.

From his dilatory movements, Washington suspected Sir Henry of a design to draw him down into the level country, and then, by a rapid movement on his right, to gain possession of the strong ground above him, and bring him to a general action on disadvantageous terms. He himself was inclined for a general action whenever it could be made on suitable ground: he halted, therefore, at Hopewell, about five miles from Princeton, and held another council of war while his troops were reposing and refreshing themselves. The result of it, writes his aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton, "would have done honor to the most honorable society of midwives, and to them only."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> MS. letter of Hamilton to Elias Boudinot.

The purport was to keep at a distance from the enemy, and annoy them by detachments. Lee, according to Hamilton, was the prime mover of this plan; in pursuance of which a detachment of fifteen hundred men was sent off under Brigadier-General Scott, to join the other troops near the enemy's line. Lee was even opposed to sending so large a number. Generals Greene, Wayne, and Lafayette were in the minority in the council, and subsequently gave separately the same opinion in writing, that the rear of the enemy should be attacked by a strong detachment, while the main army should be so disposed as to give a general battle, should circumstances render it advisable. As this opinion coincided with his own, Washington determined to act upon it.

Sir Henry Clinton in the mean time had advanced to Allentown, on his way to Brunswick, to embark on the Raritan. Finding the passage of that river likely to be strongly disputed by the forces under Washington, and others advancing from the north under Gates, he changed his plan, and turned to the right by a road leading through Freehold to Navesink and Sandy Hook; to embark at the latter place.

Washington, no longer in doubt as to the route of the enemy's march, detached Wayne with one thousand men to join the advanced corps, which, thus augmented, was upwards of four thousand strong. The command of the advance properly belonged to Lee as senior major-general; but it was eagerly solicited by Lafayette, as an attack by it was intended, and Lee was strenuously opposed to every thing of the kind. Washington willingly gave his consent, provided General Lee were satisfied with the arrangement. The latter ceded the command without hesitation, observing to the marquis that he was well pleased to be freed from all responsibility in executing plans which he was sure would fail.

Lafayette set out on the 25th to form a junction as soon as possible with the force under General Scott; while Washington, leaving his baggage at Kingston, moved with the main body to Cranberry, three miles in the rear of the advanced corps, to be ready to support it.

Scarce, however, had Lee relinquished the command, when he changed his mind. In a note to Washington, he declared that, in assenting to the arrangement, he had considered the command of the detachment one more fitting a young volunteering general than a veteran like himself, second in command in the army. He now viewed it in a different light. Lafayette would be at the head of all the Continental parties already

in the line; six thousand men at least; a command next to that of the commander-in-chief. Should the detachment march, therefore, he entreated to have the command of it. So far he spoke personally, "but," added he, "to speak as an officer, I do not think that this detachment ought to march at all, until at least the head of the enemy's right column has passed Cranberry; then if it is necessary to march the whole army, I cannot see any impropriety in the marquis's commanding this detachment, or a greater, as an advanced guard of the army; but if this detachment, with Maxwell's corps, Scott's, Morgan's and Jackson's, is to be considered as a separate, chosen, active corps, and put under the marquis's command until the enemy leave the Jerseys, both myself and Lord Stirling will be disgraced."

Washington was perplexed how to satisfy Lee's punctilious claims without wounding the feelings of Lafayette. A change in the disposition of the enemy's line of march furnished an expedient. Sir Henry Clinton, finding himself harassed by light troops on the flanks, and in danger of an attack in the rear, placed all his baggage in front under the convoy of Knyphausen, while he threw the main strength of his army in the rear under Lord Cornwallis.

This made it necessary for Washington to strengthen his advanced corps; and he took this occasion to detach Lee, with Scott's and Varnum's brigades, to support the force under Lafayette. As Lee was the senior major-general, this gave him the command of the whole advance. Washington explained the matter in a letter to the marquis, who resigned the command to Lee when the latter joined him on the 27th. That evening the enemy encamped on high ground near Monmouth Court-House. Lee encamped with the advance at Englishtown, about five miles distant. The main body was three miles in his rear.

About sunset, Washington rode forward to the advance, and anxiously reconnoitred Sir Henry's position. It was protected by woods and morasses, and too strong to be attacked with a prospect of success. Should the enemy, however, proceed ten or twelve miles further unmolested, they would gain the heights of Middletown, and be on ground still more difficult. To prevent this, he resolved that an attack should be made on their rear early in the morning, as soon as their front should be in motion. This plan he communicated to General Lee, in presence of his officers, ordering him to make dispositions for the attack, keeping his troops lying on their arms, ready for action



on the shortest notice; a disposition he intended to observe with his own troops. This done, he rode back to the main body.

Apprehensive that Sir Henry might decamp in the night, Washington sent orders to Lee before midnight, to detach six or seven hundred men to lie near the enemy, watch and give notice of their movements, and hold them in check when on the march, until the rest of the troops could come up. General Dickinson was charged by Lee with this duty. Morgan was likewise stationed with his corps to be ready for skirmishing.

Early in the morning, Washington received an express from Dickinson, informing him that the enemy were in motion. He instantly sent orders to Lee to push forward and attack them, unless there should be powerful reasons to the contrary, adding that he was coming on to support him. For that purpose he immediately set forward with his own troops, ordering them to throw by their knapsacks and blankets.

Knyphausen, with the British vanguard, had begun about daybreak to descend into the valley between Monmouth Court-House and Middletown. To give the long train of wagons and pack horses time to get well on the way, Sir Henry Clinton with his choice troops remained in camp on the heights of Freehold, until eight o'clock, when he likewise resumed the line of march towards Middletown.

In the mean time Lee, on hearing of the early movement of the enemy, had advanced with the brigades of Wayne and Maxwell, to support the light troops engaged in skirmishing. The difficulty of reconnoitring a country cut up by woods and morasses, and the perplexity occasioned by contradictory reports, embarrassed his movements. Being joined by Lafayette with the main body of the advance, he had now about four thousand men at his command, independent of those under Morgan and General Dickinson.

Arriving on the heights of Freehold, and riding forward with General Wayne to an open place to reconnoitre, Lee caught sight of a force under march, but partly hidden from view by intervening woods. Supposing it to be a mere covering party of about two thousand men, he detached Wayne with seven hundred men and two pieces of artillery, to skirmish in its rear and hold it in check; while he, with the rest of his force, taking a shorter road through the woods, would get in front of it, and cut it off from the main body. He at the same time sent a message to Washington, apprising him of this movement and of his certainty of success.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Dr. McHenry on the Court-Martial.

Washington in the mean time was on his march with the main body, to support the advance, as he had promised. The booming of cannon at a distance indicated that the attack so much desired had commenced, and caused him to quicken his march. Arrived near Freehold church, where the road forked, he detached Greene with part of his forces to the right, to flank the enemy in the rear of Monmouth Court-House, while he, with the rest of the column, would press forward by the other road.

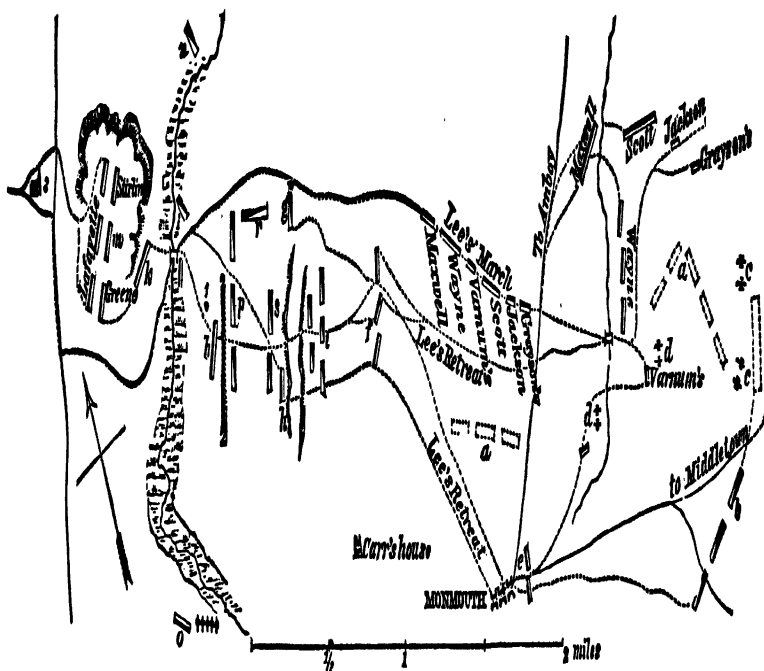
Washington had alighted while giving these directions, and was standing with his arm thrown over his horse, when a countryman rode up and said the Continental troops were retreating. Washington was provoked at what he considered a false alarm. The man pointed, as his authority, to an American fifer who just then came up in breathless affright. The fifer was ordered into custody to prevent his spreading an alarm among the troops who were advancing, and was threatened with a flogging should he repeat the story.

Springing on his horse, Washington had moved forward but a short distance when he met other fugitives, one in the garb of a soldier, who all concurred in the report. He now sent forward Colonels Fitzgerald and Harrison, to learn the truth, while he himself spurred past Freehold meeting house. Between that edifice and the morass beyond it, he met Grayson's and Patton's regiments in most disorderly retreat, jaded with heat and fatigue. Riding up to the officer at their head, Washington demanded whether the whole advanced corps were retreating. The officer believed they were.

It seemed incredible. There had been scarce any firing—Washington had received no notice of the retreat from Lee. He was still almost inclined to doubt, when the heads of several columns of the advance began to appear. It was too evident—the whole advance was falling back on the main body, and no notice had been given to him. One of the first officers that came up was Colonel Shreve, at the head of his regiment; Washington, greatly surprised and alarmed, asked the meaning of this retreat. The colonel smiled significantly—he did not know—he had retreated by order. There had been no fighting excepting a slight skirmish with the enemy's cavalry, which had been repulsed.

A suspicion flashed across Washington's mind, of wrong-headed conduct on the part of Lee, to mar the plan of attack adopted contrary to his counsels. Ordering Colonel Shreve to march his men over the morass, halt them on the hill beyond

# PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH



- a..Position occupied by the British the night before the Battle.
- b..British detachment moving toward Monmouth.
- c..British Batteries.—d..Captain Oswald's American Batteries.
- e..American troops formed near the Court-house.
- f..First position taken by General Lee in his retreat.
- g..Attack by a party of British in the woods.
- h..Positions taken by General Lee.—i..British detachment.
- k..Last position of the retreating troops.

- m..Army formed by General Washington after he met General Lee retreating.
- n..British detachment.—o..American battery.—p..Principal action.
- r..First position of the British after the action.—s..Second position.
- t..British passed the night after the battle.
- 1..Where Washington met Lee retreating.—2..Hedge row.—3..Meeting-house.



and refresh them, he galloped forward to stop the retreat of the rest of the advance, his indignation kindling as he rode. At the rear of the regiment he met Major Howard: he, too, could give no reason for the retreat, but seemed provoked at it—declaring that he had never seen the like. Another officer exclaimed with an oath that they were flying from a shadow.

Arriving at a rising ground, Washington beheld Lee approaching with the residue of his command in full retreat. By this time he was thoroughly exasperated.

“What is the meaning of all this, sir?” demanded he, in the sternest and even fiercest tone, as Lee rode up to him.

Lee for a moment was disconcerted, and hesitated in making a reply, for Washington’s aspect, according to Lafayette, was terrible.

“I desire to know the meaning of this disorder and confusion,” was again demanded still more vehemently.

Lee, stung by the manner more than the words of the demand, made an angry reply, and provoked still sharper expressions, which have been variously reported. He attempted a hurried explanation. His troops had been thrown into confusion by contradictory intelligence; by disobedience of orders; by the meddling and blundering of individuals; and he had not felt disposed, he said, to beard the whole British army with troops in such a situation.

“I have certain information,” rejoined Washington, “that it was merely a strong covering party.”

“That may be, but it was stronger than mine, and I did not think proper to run such a risk.”

“I am very sorry,” replied Washington, “that you undertook the command, unless you meant to fight the enemy.”

“I did not think it prudent to bring on a general engagement.”

“Whatever your opinion may have been,” replied Washington, disdainfully, “I expected my orders would have been obeyed.”

This all passed rapidly, and, as it were, in flashes, for there was no time for parley. The enemy were within a quarter of an hour’s march. Washington’s appearance had stopped the retreat. The fortunes of the day were to be retrieved, if possible, by instant arrangements. These he proceeded to make with great celerity. The place was favorable for a stand; it was a rising ground, to which the enemy could approach only over a narrow causeway. The rallied troops were hastily formed upon this eminence. Colonels Stewart and Ramsay,

with two batteries, were stationed in a covert of woods on their left, to protect them and keep the enemy at bay. Colonel Oswald was posted for the same purpose on a height, with two field-pieces. The promptness with which every thing was done showed the effects of the Baron Steuben's discipline.

In the interim, Lee, being asked about the disposition of some of the troops, replied that he could give no orders in the matter; as he supposed General Washington intended he should have no further command.

Shortly after this, Washington, having made all his arrangements with great despatch but admirable clearness and precision, rode back to Lee in calmer mood, and inquired, "Will you retain the command on this height or not? if you will, I will return to the main body, and have it formed on the next height."

"It is equal to me where I command," replied Lee.

"I expect you will take proper means for checking the enemy," rejoined Washington.

"Your orders shall be obeyed; and I shall not be the first to leave the ground," was the reply.

A warm cannonade by Oswald, Stewart, and Ramsey, had the desired effect. The enemy were brought to a stand, and Washington had time to gallop back and bring on the main body. This he formed on an eminence, with a wood in the rear and the morass in front. The left wing was commanded by Lord Stirling, who had with him a detachment of artillery and several field-pieces. General Greene was on his right.

Lee had maintained his advanced position with great spirit, but was at length obliged to retire. He brought off his troops in good order across a causeway which traversed the morass in front of Lord Stirling. As he had promised, he was the last to leave the ground. Having formed his men in a line, beyond the morass, he rode up to Washington. "Here, sir, are my troops," said he; "how is it your pleasure I should dispose of them?" Washington saw that the poor fellows were exhausted by marching, counter-marching, hard fighting and the intolerable heat of the weather: he ordered Lee, therefore, to repair with them to the rear of Englishtown, and assemble there all the scattered fugitives he might meet with.

The batteries under the direction of Lord Stirling opened a brisk and well-sustained fire upon the enemy; who, finding themselves warmly opposed in front, attempted to turn the left flank of the Americans, but were driven back by detached parties of infantry stationed there. They then attempted the right; but here were met by General Greene, who had planted

his artillery under Knox, on a commanding ground, and not only checked them but enfiladed those who were in front of the left wing. Wayne too, with an advanced party posted in an orchard, and partly sheltered by a barn, kept up a severe and well-directed fire upon the enemy's centre. Repeated attempts were made to dislodge him, but in vain. Colonel Monckton of the royal grenadiers, who had distinguished himself and been wounded in the battle of Long Island, now undertook to drive Wayne from his post at the point of the bayonet. Having made a brief harangue to his men, he led them on in column. Wayne's men reserved their fire until Colonel Monckton, waving his sword, called out to his grenadiers to charge. At that instant a sheeted volley laid him low, and made great slaughter in his column, which was again repulsed.

The enemy at length gave way, and fell back to the ground which Lee had occupied in the morning. Here their flanks were secured by woods and morasses, and their front could only be approached across a narrow causeway.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the position, Washington prepared to attack it; ordering General Poor with his own and the Carolina brigade, to move round upon their right, and General Woodford on their left; while the artillery should gall them in front. Before these orders could be carried into effect the day was at an end. Many of the soldiers had sunk upon the ground, overcome by fatigue and the heat of the weather; all needed repose. The troops, therefore, which had been in the advance, were ordered to lie on their arms on the ground they occupied, so as to be ready to make the attack by daybreak. The main army did the same, on the field of action, to be at hand to support them. Washington lay on his cloak at the foot of a tree, with Lafayette beside him, talking over the strange conduct of Lee; whose disorderly retreat had come so near being fatal to the army.

It was indeed a matter of general perplexity, to which the wayward character of Lee greatly contributed. Some who recollected his previous opposition to all plan of attack, almost suspected him of wilfully aiming to procure a defeat. It would appear, however, that he had been really surprised and thrown into a confusion by a move of Sir Henry Clinton, who, seeing the force under Lee descending on his rear from Freehold heights, had suddenly turned upon it, aided by troops from Knyphausen's division, to oblige it to call to its assistance the flanking parties under Morgan and Dickinson, which were threatening his baggage train. So that Lee, instead of a mere

covering party which he had expected to cut off, had found himself front to front with the whole rear division of the British army; and that, too, on unfavorable ground, with a deep ravine and a morass in his rear.

He endeavored to form his troops for action. Oswald's artillery began to play, and there was some skirmishing with the enemy's light horse, in which they were repulsed. But mistakes occurred; orders were misunderstood; one corps after another fell back, until the whole retreated, almost without a struggle, before an inferior force. Lee, himself, seemed to partake of the confusion; taking no pains to check the retrograde movement, nor to send notice of it to the main body upon which they were falling back.

What opinions Washington gave on the subject, in the course of his conversation with the marquis, the latter does not tell us; after it was ended, he wrapped himself in his cloak, and slept at the foot of the tree, among his soldiers.

At daybreak the drums beat the reveillé. The troops roused themselves from their heavy sleep, and prepared for action. To their surprise, the enemy had disappeared: there was a deserted camp, in which were found four officers and about forty privates, too severely wounded to be conveyed away by the retreating army. Sir Henry Clinton, it appeared, had allowed his wearied troops but short repose on the preceding night. At ten o'clock, when the American forces were buried in their first sleep, he had set forward to join the division under Knyphausen, which, with the baggage train, having pushed on during the action, was far on the road to Middletown. So silent had been his retreat, that it was unheard by General Poor's advance party, which lay near by.

The distance to which the enemy must by this time have attained, the extreme heat of the weather, and the condition of the troops, deterred Washington from continuing a pursuit through a country where the roads were deep and sandy, and there was a great scarcity of water. Besides, persons well acquainted with the country assured him that it would be impossible to annoy the enemy in their embarkation, as he must approach the place by a narrow passage, capable of being defended by a few men against his whole force. Detaching General Maxwell's brigade and Morgan's rifle corps, therefore, to hang on the rear of the enemy, prevent depredation and encourage desertions, he determined to shape his course with his main body by Brunswick towards the Hudson, lest Sir Henry should have any design upon the posts there.



The American loss in the recent battle was eight officers and sixty-one privates killed, and about one hundred and sixty wounded. Among the slain were Lieutenant-Colonel Bonner of Pennsylvania, and Major Dickinson of Virginia, both greatly regretted.

The officers who had charge of the burying parties reported that they found two hundred and forty-five non-commissioned officers and privates, and four officers, left dead by the enemy on the field of battle. There were fresh graves in the vicinity also, into which the enemy had hurried their slain before retreating. The number of prisoners, including those found wounded, was upwards of one hundred.

Some of the troops on both sides had perished in the morass, some were found on the border of a stream which ran through it among alder bushes, whither, overcome by heat, fatigue and thirst, they had crawled to drink and die.

Among the gallant slain of the enemy was Colonel Monckton, who fell so bravely when leading on his grenadiers. His remains were interred in the burial-ground of the Freehold meeting-house, upon a stone of which edifice his name is rudely cut.<sup>1</sup>

After giving his troops a day's repose, Washington decamped on the 30th. His march lay through a country destitute of water, with deep, sandy roads wearying to the feet, and reflecting the intolerable heat and glare of a July sun. Many of the troops, harassed by previous fatigue, gave out by the way. Some few died, and a number of horses were likewise lost. Washington, ever considerate of the health and comfort of his men, encamped near Brunswick on open, airy grounds, and gave them time to repose; while Lieutenant-Colonel Aaron Burr, at that time a young and enterprising officer, was sent on a reconnoitring expedition, to learn the movements and intentions of the enemy. He was authorized to despatch trusty persons into New York to make observations, collect reports, and get newspapers. Others were to be sent to the heights of Bergen, Weehawk and Hoboken, which command a view of the bay and river, to observe the situation of the enemy's forces, and note whether any movement among the shipping gave signs of an expedition up the Hudson; the immediate object of solicitude.

Sir Henry Clinton with the royal army had arrived at the Highlands of Navesink, in the neighborhood of Sandy Hook, on the 30th of June. He had lost many men by desertion,

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<sup>1</sup> Lossing's Field Book of the Revolution, ii. 363.

Hessians especially, during his march through the Jerseys, which, with his losses by killed, wounded and captured, had diminished his army more than two thousand men. The storms of the preceding winter had cut off the peninsula of Sandy Hook from the main land, and formed a deep channel between them. Fortunately the squadron of Lord Howe had arrived the day before, and was at anchor within the Hook. A bridge was immediately made across the channel with the boats of the ships, over which the army passed to the Hook on the 5th of July, and thence was distributed.

It was now encamped in three divisions on Staten Island, Long Island, and the island of New York: apparently without any immediate design of offensive operations. There was a vigorous press in New York to man the large ships and fit them for sea, but this was in consequence of a report that a French fleet had arrived on the coast.

Relieved by this intelligence from all apprehensions of an expedition by the enemy up the Hudson, Washington relaxed the speed of his movements, and halted for a few days at Paramus, sparing his troops as much as possible during the extreme summer heats.

## CHAPTER XV.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LEE AND WASHINGTON RELATIVE TO THE AFFAIR OF MONMOUTH — LEE ASKS A TRIAL BY COURT-MARTIAL — THE VERDICT — LEE'S SUBSEQUENT HISTORY.

HAVING brought the army to a halt, we have time to notice a correspondence between General Lee and Washington immediately subsequent to the affair of Monmouth. The pride of the general had been deeply wounded by the rebuke he had received on the field of battle. On the following day (June 29) he addressed a note to Washington on the subject. By mistake it was dated July 1. "From the knowledge I have of your Excellency's character," writes he, "I must conclude that nothing but the misinformation of some very stupid, or misrepresentation of some very wicked person, could have occasioned your making use of so very singular expressions as you did on my coming up to the ground where you had taken post. They implied that I was guilty either of disobedience of orders, want of conduct, or want of courage. Your Excel-

lency will therefore infinitely oblige me by letting me know on which of these three articles you ground your charge. I ever had, and hope ever shall have, the greatest respect and veneration for General Washington. I think him endowed with many great and good qualities; but in this instance, I must pronounce that he has been guilty of an act of cruel injustice towards a man, who certainly has some pretensions to the regard of every servant of this country. And I think, sir, I have a right to demand some reparation for the injury committed; and, unless I can obtain it, I must in justice to myself, when this campaign is closed, which I believe will close the war, retire from the service at the head of which is placed a man capable of offering such injustices. But at the same time, in justice to you, I must repeat that I from my soul believe that it is not a motion of your own breast, but instigated by some of those dirty earwigs, who will forever insinuate themselves near persons high in office: for I really am convinced that when George Washington acts from himself, no man in his army will have reason to complain of injustice or indecorum."

The following was Washington's reply :

"Sir, — I received your letter (dated through mistake the 1st of July), expressed as I conceive in terms highly improper. I am not conscious of making use of any very singular expressions at the time of meeting you, as you intimate. What I recollect to have said was dictated by duty and warranted by the occasion. As soon as circumstances will permit, you shall have an opportunity of justifying yourself to the army, to Congress, to America, and to the world in general; or of convincing them that you were guilty of a breach of orders, and of misbehavior before the enemy on the 28th instant, in not attacking them as you had been directed, and in making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat. I am," etc., etc.

To this Lee rejoined, in a note, misdated 28th June. "Sir, you cannot afford me greater pleasure than in giving me the opportunity of showing to America the sufficiency of her respective servants. I trust that temporary power of office, and the tinsel dignity attending it, will not be able, by all the mists they can raise, to offuscate the bright rays of truth. In the mean time, your Excellency can have no objection to my retiring from the army," etc.

Shortly after despatching this note, Lee addressed another to Washington. "I have reflected on both your situation and mine," writes he, "and beg leave to observe, that it will be for our mutual convenience that a court of inquiry should be immediately ordered; but I could wish that it might be a court-martial; for, if the affair is drawn into length, it may be difficult to collect the necessary evidences, and perhaps might bring on a paper war betwixt the adherents to both parties, which may occasion some disagreeable feuds on the continent; for all are not my friends, nor all your admirers. I must entreat, therefore, from your love of justice, that you will immediately exhibit your charge, and that on the first halt I may be brought to a trial."

Washington in reply acknowledged the receipt of the two last notes, and added, "I have sent Colonel Scammel and the adjutant-general, to put you under arrest, who will deliver you a copy of the charges on which you will be tried."

The following were the charges.

1st. Disobedience of orders, in not attacking the enemy on the 28th June, agreeably to repeated instructions.

2d. Misbehavior before the enemy on the same day, by making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat.

3d. Disrespect to the commander-in-chief in two letters, dated the 1st of July, and the 28th of June.

A court-martial was accordingly formed on the 4th of July, at Brunswick, the first halting place. It was composed of one major-general, four brigadiers, and eight colonels, with Lord Stirling as president. It moved with the army, and convened subsequently at Paramus, Peekskill, and Northcastle, the trial lasting until the 12th of August. From the time it commenced, Washington never mentioned Lee's name when he could avoid it, and when he could not, he mentioned it without the smallest degree of acrimony or disrespect.

Lee, on the contrary, indulged his natural irritability of temper and sharpness of tongue. When put on his guard against any intemperate railings against Washington, as calculated to injure his cause, he spurned at the advice. "No attack, it seems, can be made on General Washington but it must recoil on the assailant. I never entertained the most distant wish or intention of attacking General Washington. I have ever honored and respected him as a man and a citizen; but if the circle which surrounds him chooses to erect him into an infallible divinity, I shall certainly prove a heretic; and if, great as he is, he can attempt wounding every thing I ought to hold dear, he

must thank his priests if his deityship gets scratched in the scuffle."<sup>1</sup>

In the repeated sessions of the court-martial and the long examinations which took place, many of the unfavorable impressions first received, concerning the conduct and motives of Lee, were softened. Some of the officers in his detachment, who had made accusations against him to the commander-in-chief previous to the trial, especially Generals Wayne and Scott, were found not to have understood all the circumstances of the case in which he was placed in his encounter with the rear division of Sir Henry Clinton, and that that division had been largely re-enforced by troops from General Knyphausen.

Lee defended himself with ability. He contended that after the troops had commenced to fall back, in consequence of a retrograde movement of General Scott, he had intended to form them on the first advantageous ground he could find, and that none such presented itself until he reached the place where he met General Washington; on which very place he had intended to make battle.

He denied that in the whole course of the day he had uttered the word retreat. "But this retreat," said he, "though necessary, was brought about contrary to my orders, contrary to my intention; and, if any thing can deduct from my credit, it is, that I did not *order* a retreat which was so necessary."<sup>2</sup>

Judge Marshall observes of the variety of reasons given by Lee in justification of his retreat, "if they do not absolutely establish its propriety, they give it so questionable a form, as to render it probable that a public examination never would have taken place, could his proud spirit have stooped to offer explanation instead of outrage to the commander-in-chief."

The result of the prolonged and tedious investigation was, that he was found guilty of all the charges exhibited against him; the second charge, however, was softened by omitting the word *shameful*, and convicting him of making an "unnecessary, and in some instances a disorderly retreat." He was sentenced to be suspended from all command for one year: this sentence to be approved or set aside by Congress.

We must again anticipate dates, to dispose briefly of the career of General Lee, who is not connected with subsequent events of the Revolution. Congress were more than three months in coming to a decision on the proceedings of the court-martial. As the House always sat with closed doors, the

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Joseph Reed. Sparks, Biog. of Lee, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Dr. Rush. Sparks, Biog. of Lee.

debates on the subject are unknown, but are said to have been warm. Lee urged for speedy action, and regretted that the people at large could not be admitted to form an audience, when the discussion was entered into of the justice or iniquity, wisdom or absurdity of the sentence that had been passed upon him. At length, on the 5th of December, the sentence was approved in a very thin session of Congress, fifteen members voting in the affirmative and seven in the negative.

From that time Lee was unmeasured in his abuse of Washington, and his reprobation of the court-martial, which he termed a "court of inquisition." He published a long article in the newspapers relative to the trial and to the affair at Monmouth, calculated to injure Washington. "I have neither the leisure nor inclination," observes the latter, "to enter the lists with him in a newspaper; and so far as his production points to personality, I can and do from my inmost soul despise it. . . . It became a part of General Lee's plan, from the moment of his arrest, though it was an event solicited by himself, to have the world believe that he was a persecuted man, and party was at the bottom of it. But however convenient it may have been for his purposes to establish this belief, I defy him, or his most zealous partisans, to adduce a single instance in proof of it, unless bringing him to trial, at his own request, be considered in this light. I can do more; I will defy any person, out of my own family, to say, that I have ever mentioned his name, if it was to be avoided; and when not, that I have not studiously declined expressing any sentiment of him or his behavior. How far this conduct accords with his, let his own breast decide. . . . As I never entertained any jealousy of him, so neither did I ever do more than common civility and proper respect to his rank required, to conciliate his good opinion. His temper and plans were too versatile and violent to attract my admiration; and, that I have escaped the venom of his tongue and pen so long, is more to be wondered at than applauded; as it is a favor of which no officer, under whose immediate command he ever served, has had the happiness, if happiness can be thus denominated, of boasting."<sup>1</sup>

Lee's aggressive tongue at length involved him in a quarrel with Colonel Laurens, one of Washington's aides, a high-spirited young gentleman, who felt himself bound to vindicate the honor of his chief. A duel took place, and Lee was wounded in the side.

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<sup>1</sup> Washington to Reed. Sparks, vol. vi. 133.

Towards spring he retired to his estate in Berkley County in Virginia, "to learn to hoe tobacco, which," observes he with a sarcastic innuendo at Washington, "is the best school to form a consummate *General*. This is a discovery I have lately made."

He led a kind of hermit life on his estate: dogs and horses were his favorite companions. His house is described as being a mere shell, destitute of comforts and conveniences. For want of partitions the different parts were designated by lines chalked on the floor. In one corner was his bed; in another were his books; his saddles and harness in a third; a fourth served as a kitchen.

"Sir," said he to a visitor, "it is the most convenient and economical establishment in the world. The lines of chalk which you see on the floor, mark the divisions of the apartments, and I can sit in any corner and overlook the whole without moving from my chair."

In this retirement he solaced his mortification and resentment by exercising his caustic pen in "*Queries Political and Military*," intended to disparage the merits and conduct of Washington, and which were published in a Maryland newspaper. His attempts, it is needless to say, were fallacious, and only recoiled on his own head.

The term of his suspension had expired, when a rumor reached him that Congress intended to take away his commission. He was in bodily pain at the time; his horses were at the door for an excursion of business, the intelligence "ruffled his temper beyond all bounds." In his hurry and heat, without attempting to ascertain the truth of the report, he scrawled the following note to the President of Congress: "Sir, I understand that it is in contemplation of Congress, on the principle of economy, to strike me out of their service. Congress must know very little of me, if they suppose that I would accept of their money, since the confirmation of the wicked and infamous sentence which was passed upon me. I am, sir," etc.

This insolent note occasioned his prompt dismissal from the service. He did not complain of it; but in a subsequent and respectful letter to the president, explained the mistaken information which had produced his note, and the state of body and mind in which it was written. "But, sir," added he, "I must entreat, in the acknowledging of the impropriety and indecorum of my conduct in this affair, it may not be supposed that I mean to court a restoration to the rank I held; so far from it, that I do assure you, had not the incident fallen out, I

should have requested Congress to accept my resignation, as, for obvious reasons, whilst the army is continued in its present circumstances, I could not serve with safety and dignity," etc.

Though bitter in his enmities, Lee had his friendships, and was warm and constant in them as far as his capricious humors would allow. There was nothing crafty or mean in his character, nor do we think he ever engaged in the low intrigues of the cabal; but he was a disappointed and embittered man, and the gall of bitterness overflowed his generous qualities. In such a discordant state of feeling, he was not a man for the sweet solitude of the country. He became weary of his Virginia estate; though in one of the most fertile regions of the Shenandoah Valley. His farm was mismanaged; his agents were unfaithful; he entered into negotiations to dispose of his property, in the course of which he visited Philadelphia. On arriving there, he was taken with chills, followed by a fever, which went on increasing in violence, and terminated fatally. A soldier even unto the end, warlike scenes mingled with the delirium of his malady. In his dying moments he fancied himself on the field of battle. The last words he was heard to utter were, "Stand by me, my brave grenadiers!"

He left a will and testament strongly marked by his peculiarities. There are bequests to intimates of horses, weapons, and sums to purchase rings of affection; ample and generous provisions for domestics, one of whom he styles his "old and faithful servant, or rather, humble friend." His landed estate in Berkley was to be divided into three equal parts, two of them between two of his former aides-de-camp, and the other third between two gentlemen to whom he felt under obligations. All his residuary property to go to his sister Sidney Lee and her heirs.

Eccentric to the last, one clause of his will regards his sepulture: "I desire most earnestly that I may not be buried in any church or churchyard, or within a mile of any Presbyterian or Anabaptist meeting-house; for, since I have resided in this country, I have kept so much bad company while living, that I do not choose to continue it when dead."

This part of his will was not complied with. He was buried with military honors in the cemetery of Christ church; and his funeral was attended by the highest civic and military characters, and a large concourse of citizens.

The magnanimity exhibited by Washington in regard to Lee while living, continued after his death. He never spoke of him with asperity, but did justice to his merits, acknowledging that "he possessed many great qualities."



In after years, there was a proposition to publish the manuscripts of General Lee, and Washington was consulted in the matter, as there might be hostile articles among them which he might wish to have omitted. "I can have no request to make concerning the work," writes he in reply. "I never had a difference with that gentleman but on public grounds; and my conduct towards him on this occasion was such, only, as I felt myself indispensably bound to adopt in discharge of the public trust reposed in me. If this produced in him unfavorable sentiments of me, I can never consider the conduct I pursued, with respect to him, either wrong or improper, however I may regret that it may have been differently viewed by him, and that it excited his anger and animadversions. Should there appear in General Lee's writings any thing injurious or unfriendly to me, the impartial and dispassionate world must decide how far I deserved it from the general tenor of my conduct."

## CHAPTER XVI.

ARRIVAL OF A FRENCH FLEET — CORRESPONDENCE OF WASHINGTON AND THE COUNT D'ESTAING — PLANS OF THE COUNT — PERTURBATION AT NEW YORK — EXCITEMENT IN THE FRENCH FLEET — EXPEDITION AGAINST RHODE ISLAND — OPERATIONS BY SEA AND LAND — FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION — IRRITATION BETWEEN THE ALLIED FORCES — CONSIDERATE LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO THE COUNT D'ESTAING.

WHILE encamped at Paramus, Washington, in the night of the 13th of July, received a letter from Congress informing him of the arrival of a French fleet on the coast; instructing him to concert measures with the commander, the Count D'Estaing, for offensive operations by sea and land, and empowering him to call on the States from New Hampshire to New Jersey inclusive, to aid with their militia.

The fleet in question was composed of twelve ships of the line and six frigates, with a land force of four thousand men. On board of it came Mons. Gerard, minister from France to the United States, and the Hon. Silas Deane, one of the American ministers who had effected the late treaty of alliance. The fleet had sailed from Toulon on the 13th of April. After struggling against adverse winds for eighty-seven or eighty-eight days, it had made its appearance off the northern

extremity of the Virginia coast, and anchored at the mouth of the Delaware on the 8th of July. Thence the count despatched a letter to Washington, dated at sea. "I have the honor of imparting to your Excellency," writes he, "the arrival of the king's fleet, charged by his majesty with the glorious task of giving his allies, the United States of America, the most striking proofs of his affection. Nothing will be wanting to my happiness, if I can succeed in it. It is augmented by the consideration of concerting my operations with a general such as your Excellency. The talents and great actions of general Washington have insured him, in the eyes of all Europe, the title truly sublime of Deliverer of America," etc.

The count was unfortunate in the length of his voyage. Had he arrived in ordinary time, he might have entrapped Lord Howe's squadron in the river; co-operated with Washington in investing the British army by sea and land, and by cutting off its retreat to New York, compelled it to surrender.

Finding the enemy had evacuated both city and river, the count sent up the French minister and Mr. Deane to Philadelphia in a frigate, and then putting to sea, continued along the coast. A little earlier, and he might have intercepted the squadron of Lord Howe on its way to New York. It had had but a very few days the advantage of him, and when he arrived with his fleet in the road outside of Sandy Hook, he descried the British ships quietly anchored inside of it.

A frank and cordial correspondence took place forthwith between the count and Washington, and a plan of action was concerted between them by the intervention of confidential officers; Washington's aides-de-camp, Laurens and Hamilton, boarding the fleet while off the Hook, and Major Chouin, a French officer of merit, repairing to the American headquarters.

The first idea of the count was to enter at Sandy Hook, and capture or destroy the British fleet composed of six ships of the line, four fifty-gun ships, and a number of frigates and smaller vessels; should he succeed in this, which his greatly superior force rendered probable, he was to proceed against the city, with the co-operation of the American forces. To be at hand for such purposes, Washington crossed the Hudson, with his army, at King's Ferry, and encamped at White Plains about the 20th of July.

In the mean time New York was once more in a violent perturbation. "British seamen," says a writer of the times, "endured the mortification, for the first time, of seeing a

British fleet blocked up and insulted in their own harbor, and the French flag flying triumphant without. And this was still more embittered and aggravated, by beholding every day vessels under English colors captured under their very eyes by the enemy."<sup>1</sup> The army responded to their feelings; many royalists of the city, too, hastened to offer their services as volunteers; there was, in short, a prodigious stir in every department, military and naval.

On the other hand, the French officers and crews were in the highest state of excitement and exultation. The long, low point of Sandy Hook was all that intervened between them and a splendid triumph, and they anticipated the glory of "delivering America from the English colors which they saw waving on the other side of a simple barrier of sand upon so great a crown of masts."<sup>2</sup>

Several experienced American pilots and masters of vessels, however, who had accompanied Colonels Laurens and Hamilton on board of the fleet, declared that there was not sufficient depth of water on the bar to admit the safe passage of the largest ships, one of which carried 80 and another 90 guns: the attempt, therefore, was reluctantly abandoned; and the ships anchored about four miles off, near Shrewsbury on the Jersey coast, taking in provisions and water.

The enterprise which the American and French commanders deemed next worthy of a combined operation, was the re-capture of Rhode Island proper, that is to say, the island which gives its name to the State, and which the enemy had made one of their military depots and strongholds. In anticipation of such an enterprise, Washington on the 17th of July wrote to General Sullivan, who commanded at Providence, ordering him to make the necessary preparations for a descent from the mainland upon the island, and authorizing him to call in reinforcements of New England militia. He subsequently sent to his aid the Marquis Lafayette with two brigades (Varnum's and Glover's). Quartermaster-General Greene also was detached for the service, being a native of the island, well acquainted with its localities, and having great influence among its inhabitants. Sullivan was instructed to form his whole force, Continental, State and militia, into two equal divisions, one to be commanded by Greene, the other by Lafayette.

On the 22d of July, the French fleet, having finished taking in its supplies, appeared again in full force off the bar at Sandy

<sup>1</sup> Brit. Ann Register for 1778, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of the Count.

**Hook.** The British, who supposed they had only been waiting on the Shrewsbury coast for the high tides of the latter part of July, now prepared for a desperate conflict; and, indeed, had the French fleet been enabled to enter, it is difficult to conceive a more terrible and destructive struggle than would have ensued between these gallant and deadly rivals, with their powerful armaments brought side to side, and cramped up in so confined a field of action.

D'Estaing, however, had already determined his course. After a few demonstrations off the harbor, he stood away to the eastward, and on the 29th arrived off Point Judith, coming to anchor within five miles of Newport.

Rhode Island (proper), the object of this expedition, is about sixteen miles long, running deep into the great Narragansett Bay. Seaconnet Channel separates it on the east from the mainland, and on the west the main channel passes between it and Conanicut Island. The town of Newport is situated near the south end of the island, facing the west, with Conanicut Island in front of it. It was protected by batteries and a small naval force. Here General Sir Robert Pigott, who commanded in the island, had his head-quarters. The force under him was about six thousand strong, variously posted about the island, some in works at the north end, but the greater part within strongly intrenched lines extending across the island, about three miles from the town. General Greene hastened from Providence on hearing of the arrival of the fleet of Count D'Estaing, and went on board of it at the anchorage to concert a plan of operations. Some questions of etiquette and precedence rose between them in settling the mode in which the attack was to be conducted. It was at length agreed that the fleet should force its way into the harbor at the same time that the Americans approached by land, and that the landing of the troops from the ships on the west side of the island should take place at the same time that the Americans should cross Seaconnet Channel, and land on the east side near the north end. This combined operation was to have been carried promptly into effect, but was postponed until the 10th of August, to give time for the re-enforcements sent by Washington to arrive. The delay was fatal to the enterprise.

On the 8th, the Count D'Estaing entered the harbor and passed up the main channel, exchanging a cannonade with the batteries as he passed, and anchored a little above the town, between Goat and Conanicut Islands. The English, on his approach, burnt or scuttled three frigates and some smaller

vessels, which would otherwise have been captured. General Sullivan, to be ready for the concerted attack, had moved down from Providence to the neighborhood of Howland's Ferry, on the east side of Seaconnet passage.

The British troops stationed opposite on the north end of the island, fearful of being cut off, evacuated their works in the night of the 8th, and drew into the lines at Newport.

Sullivan, seeing the works thus abandoned, could not resist the temptation to cross the channel in flat-bottomed boats on the morning of the 9th, and take possession of them.

This sudden movement, a day in advance of the concerted time, and without due notice given to the count, surprised and offended him, clashing with his notions of etiquette and punctilio. He, however, prepared to co-operate, and was ordering out his boats for the purpose, when, about two o'clock in the day, his attention was called to a great fleet of ships standing towards Newport. It was, in fact, the fleet of Lord Howe. That gallant nobleman had heard of the danger of Newport, and being re-enforced by four stout ships, part of a squadron coming out under Admiral Byron, had hastened to its relief; though still inferior in force to the French admiral. The delay of the concerted attack had enabled him to arrive in time. The wind set directly into the harbor. Had he entered promptly, the French would have been placed between two fires, from his ships and the batteries, and cramped up in a confined channel where their largest ships had no room to operate. His lordship, however, merely stood in near the land, communicated with General Pigott, and having informed himself exactly of the situation of the French fleet, came to anchor at Point Judith, some distance from the south-west entrance of the bay.

In the night the wind changed to the north-east. The count hastened to avail himself of the error of the British admiral. Favored by the wind, he stood out of the harbor at eight o'clock in the morning to give the enemy battle where he should have good sea-room; previously sending word to General Sullivan, who had advanced the preceding afternoon to Quaker Hill, about ten miles north of Newport, that he would land his promised troops and marines, and co-operate with him on his return.

The French ships were severely cannonaded as they passed the batteries, but without material damage. Forming in order of battle, they bore down upon the fleet of Lord Howe, confidently anticipating a victory from their superiority of force.

The British ships split their cables at their approach, and likewise formed in line of battle; but his lordship avoided an encounter while the enemy had the weathergage. To gain this on the one part, and retain it on the other, the two fleets manœuvred throughout the day, standing to the southward, and gradually disappearing from the anxious eyes of the belligerent forces on Rhode Island.

The army of Sullivan, now left to itself before Newport, amounted to ten thousand men, having received the militia re-enforcements. Lafayette advised the delay of hostile operations until the return of D'Estaing, but the American commander, piqued and chagrined at the departure of his allies, determined to commence the siege immediately, without waiting for his tardy aid. On the 12th, however, came on a tempest of wind and rain, which raged for two days and nights with unexampled violence. Tents were blown down; several soldiers and many horses perished, and a great part of the ammunition recently dealt out to the troops was destroyed. On the 14th, the weather cleared up and the sun shone brightly, but the army was worn down and dispirited. Had the British troops sallied forth at this juncture hale and fresh from comfortable quarters, it might have fared badly with their weather-beaten besiegers. The latter, however, being unmolested, had time to breathe and refit themselves. The day was passed in drying their clothes, cleaning their arms, and putting themselves in order for action. By the next morning they were again on the alert. Expecting the prompt return of the French, they now took post on Honeyman's Hill, about two miles from the British lines, and began to construct batteries, form lines of communication, and make regular approaches. The British were equally active in strengthening their defences. There was casual cannonading on each side, but nothing of consequence. Several days elapsed without the reappearance of the French. The situation of the besiegers was growing critical, when, on the evening of the 19th, they descried the expected fleet standing towards the harbor. All now was exultation in the camp. Should the French with their ships and troops attack the town by sea and land on the one side, while the Americans assailed it on the other, the surrender of the place was inevitable.

These sanguine anticipations, however, were short lived. The French fleet was in a shattered and forlorn condition. After sailing from before Newport, on the 20th, it had manœuvred for two days with the British fleet, each unwilling to enter into action without having the weathergage. While thus ma-

nœuvring, the same furious storm which had raged on shore separated and dispersed them with fearful ravage. Some single encounters of scattered ships subsequently took place, but without definite result. All were too much tempest-tost and disabled to make good fight. Lord Howe with such of his ships as he could collect bore away to New York to refit, and the French admiral was now before Newport, but in no plight or mood for fighting.

In a letter to General Sullivan, he informed him that pursuant to the orders of his sovereign and the advice of his officers, he was bound for Boston, being instructed to repair to that port, should he meet with misfortune, or a superior British force appear upon the coast.

Dismayed at this intelligence, which threatened ruin and disgrace to the enterprise, Sullivan wrote a letter of remonstrance to the count, and General Greene and the Marquis Lafayette repaired with it on board of the admiral's ship, to enforce it by their personal exertions. They represented to the count the certainty of carrying the place in two days, by a combined attack; and the discouragement and reproach that would follow a failure on this their first attempt at co-operation; an attempt, too, for which the Americans had made such great and expensive preparations, and on which they had indulged such sanguine hopes. These and other considerations equally urgent had their weight with the count, and he was inclined to remain and pursue the enterprise, but was overruled by the principal officers of his fleet. The fact is, that he was properly a land officer, and they had been indignant at his having a nautical command over their heads. They were glad, therefore, of any opportunity to thwart and mortify him; and now insisted on his complying with his letter of instructions, and sailing for Boston. On Lafayette's taking leave, the count assured him that he would only remain in Boston time enough to give his men repose after their long sufferings, and refit his ships; and trusted to leave the port again within three weeks after entering it, "to fight for the glory of the French name and the interests of America."<sup>1</sup>

The marquis and General Greene returned at midnight, and made a report of the ill success of their mission. Sullivan sent another letter on the following day, urging D'Estaing in any event to leave his land forces. All the general officers, excepting Lafayette, joined in signing and sending a protest

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Lafayette to Washington. *Memoirs*, T. I. p. 194.

against the departure of the fleet for Boston, as derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intention of his most Christian majesty and the interests of his nation, destructive of the welfare of the United States, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations. The fleet was already under way when Colonel Laurens got on board of the admiral's ship with the letter and protest. The count was deeply offended by the tone of the protest, and the manner in which it was conveyed to him. He declared to Colonel Laurens that "this paper imposed on the commander of the king's squadron the painful, but necessary law of profound silence." He continued his course to Boston.

At the sailing of the ships there was a feeling of exasperation throughout the camp. Sullivan gave vent to his vexation in a general order on the 24th, wherein he observed: "The general cannot help lamenting the sudden and unexpected departure of the French fleet, as he finds it has a tendency to discourage some who placed great dependence upon the assistance of it; though he can by no means suppose the army, or any part of it, endangered by this movement. He yet hopes the event will prove America able to procure that by her own arms which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining."

On cooler reflection he thought proper, in subsequent orders, to explain away the rash and unwarrantable imputation on French loyalty contained in the foregoing document, but a general feeling of irritation against the French continued to prevail in the army.

As had been foretold, the departure of the fleet was a death-blow to the enterprise. Between two and three thousand volunteers abandoned the camp in the course of four and twenty hours; others continued to go off; desertions occurred among the militia, and in a few days the number of besiegers did not exceed that of the besieged.

All thoughts of offensive operations were now at an end. The question was how best to extricate the army from its perilous position. The harbors of Rhode Island being now free, and open to the enemy, re-enforcements might pour in from New York, and render the withdrawal of the troops disastrous, if not impossible. To prepare for rapid retreat, if necessary, all the heavy artillery that could be spared, was sent off from the island. On the 28th it was determined, in a council of war, to fall back to the military works at the north end of the island, and fortify there, until it should be known



whether the French fleet would soon return to their assistance, the Marquis Lafayette setting off with all speed to have an interview with the Count D'Estaing, and ascertain the fact.

General Sullivan broke up his camp, and commenced his retreat that very night, between nine and ten o'clock; the army retiring by two roads; the rear covered by parties of light troops, under Colonels Livingston and Laurens.

Their retreat was not discovered until daylight, when a pursuit was commenced. The covering parties behaved gallantly, making frequent stands, abandoning one eminence only to take post on another, and keeping up a retreating fire that checked the advance of the enemy. After a series of skirmishes they were pressed back to the fortified grounds on the north end of the island; but Sullivan had already taken post there, on Batt's Hill, the main body of his army being drawn up in order of battle, with strong works in their rear, and a redoubt in front of the right wing.

The British now took post on an advantageous height called Quaker Hill, a little more than a mile from the American front, whence they commenced a cannonade which was briskly returned. Skirmishing ensued until about ten o'clock, when two British sloops-of-war and some small vessels having gained a favorable position, the enemy's troops, under cover of their fire, advanced in force to turn the right flank of the American army, and capture the redoubt which protected it. This was bravely defended by General Greene: a sharp action ensued, which had nearly become a general one; between two and three hundred men were killed on each side; the British at length drew back to their artillery and works on Quaker Hill, and a mutual cannonade was resumed and kept up until night.

On the following day (29th) the enemy continued his distant firing, but waited for re-enforcements before coming to close quarters. In the mean time, General Sullivan had received intelligence that Lord Howe had again put to sea with the design, no doubt, to attempt the relief of Newport; and then followed another report that a fleet with troops was actually off Block Island, and must arrive almost immediately in the harbor.

Under these circumstances it was determined to abandon Rhode Island. To do so with safety, however, required the utmost caution, as the hostile sentries were within four hundred yards of each other, and any suspicious movements would be easily discovered and reported to the British commander. The position on Batt's Hill favored a deception. Tents were brought forward and pitched in sight of the enemy,

and a great part of the troops employed throughout the day in throwing up works, as if the post was to be resolutely maintained; at the same time, the heavy baggage and stores were quietly conveyed away in the rear of the hill, and ferried across the bay. As soon as it was dark the tents were struck, fires were lighted at various points, the troops withdrawn, and in a few hours the whole were transported across the channel to the mainland. In the height of the transit Lafayette arrived. He had ridden from the island to Boston, a distance of nearly seventy miles, in seven hours, and had conferred with the French admiral.

D'Estaing had convinced him of the inadequacy of his naval force, but had made a spirited offer of leading his troops by land to co-operate with the Americans. Eager to be in time for any engagement that might take place, Lafayette had spurred back still more speedily than he went, but was disappointed and mortified at finding all the fighting over. He arrived in time, however, to bring off the pickets and covering parties, amounting to a thousand men, which he did in such excellent order, that not a man was left behind, nor the smallest article lost.

The whole army had crossed by two o'clock in the morning unperceived by the enemy, and had reason to congratulate themselves on the course they had taken, and the quickness of their movements; for the very next day Sir Henry Clinton arrived at Newport in a light squadron, with a re-enforcement of four thousand men, a naval and land force that might effectually have cut off Sullivan's retreat, had he lingered on the island.

Sir Henry, finding he had arrived a day too late, returned to New York, but first detached Major-General Sir Charles Grey with the troops, on a ravaging expedition to the eastward; chiefly against ports which were the haunts of privateers. This was the same general that had surprised Wayne in the preceding year, and effected such slaughter among his men with the bayonet. He appears to have been fitted for rough and merciless warfare. In the course of his present expedition he destroyed more than seventy vessels in Acushnet River, some of them privateers with their prizes, others peaceful merchant ships. New Bedford and Fair Haven having been made military and naval deposits, were laid waste, wharves demolished, rope-walks, storehouses and mills, with several private dwellings, wrapped in flames. Similar destruction was effected at the Island of Martha's Vineyard, a

resort of privateers; where the inhabitants were disarmed, and a heavy contribution levied upon them in sheep and cattle. Having thus ravaged the coasts of New England, the squadron returned laden with inglorious spoil to New York.

Lord Howe, also, who had sailed for Boston in the hope of intercepting the Count D'Estaing, and had reached there on the 30th of August, found the French fleet safely sheltered in Nantasket Road, and protected by American batteries erected on commanding points. He also returned to New York, and shortly afterward, availing himself of a permission granted him some time before by government, resigned the command of the fleet to Admiral Gambier, to hold it until the arrival of Admiral Byron. His lordship then returned to England, having rendered important services by his operations along the American coast and on the waters of the Delaware, and presenting a strong contrast, in his incessant activity, to the easy indolence and self-indulgence of his brother.

The failure of the combined enterprise against Rhode Island was a cause of universal chagrin and disappointment, but to none more so than to Washington, as is evident from the following passage in a letter to his brother, John Augustine :

“ An unfortunate storm, and some measures taken in consequence of it by the French admiral, blasted in one moment the fairest hopes that ever were conceived; and, from a moral certainty of success, rendered it a matter of rejoicing to get our own troops safe off the island. If the garrison of that place, consisting of nearly six thousand men, had been captured, as there was, in appearance at least, a hundred to one in favor of it, it would have given the finishing blow to British pretensions of sovereignty over this country; and would, I am persuaded, have hastened the departure of the troops in New York, as fast as their canvas wings would carry them away.”

But what gave Washington the greatest solicitude, was the effect of this disappointment upon the public mind. The failure of the enterprise was generally attributed to the departure of the French fleet from Newport, and there was at one time such popular exasperation, that it was feared the means of repairing the French ships at Boston would be withheld. Count D'Estaing and the other French officers, on their part, were irritated by the protests of the American officers, and the expressions in Sullivan's general order derogatory to French loyalty. The Count addressed a letter to Congress, explaining and vindicating his conduct subsequent to his arrival on the coast.

Washington regarded this mutual irritation which had so suddenly sprung up between the army and the fleet, with the most poignant anxiety. He wrote to Sullivan and Greene on the subject, urging them to suppress the feuds and jealousies which had already arisen, to conceal as much as possible from the soldiery and public, the misunderstandings which had occurred between the officers of the two nations; to discountenance all illiberal or unfriendly observations on the part of the army, and to cultivate the utmost harmony and good-will.

Congress, also, endeavored to suppress the protest of the officers of Sullivan's army which had given so much offence; and, in a public resolution, expressed their perfect approbation of the conduct of the count, and their sense of his zeal and attachment.

Nothing perhaps tended more to soothe his wounded sensibilities, than a letter from Washington, couched in the most delicate and considerate language. "If the deepest regret, that the best concerted enterprise and bravest exertions should have been rendered fruitless by a disaster, which human prudence was incapable of foreseeing or preventing, can alleviate disappointment, you may be assured that the whole continent sympathizes with you. It will be a consolation to you to reflect, that the thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events; and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions which deserve success, and those which have been crowned with it. It is the trying circumstances to which your Excellency has been exposed, that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre, and that a general's character is better known than in the hour of victory. It was yours, by every title which can give it; and the adverse element, which robbed you of your prize, can never deprive you of the glory due to you."

## CHAPTER XVII.

INDIAN WARFARE — DESOLATION OF THE VALLEY OF WYOMING — MOVEMENTS IN NEW YORK — COUNTER MOVEMENTS OF WASHINGTON — FORAGING PARTIES OF THE ENEMY — BAYLOR'S DRAGOONS MASSACRED AT OLD TAPPAN — BRITISH EXPEDITION AGAINST LITTLE EGG HARBOR — MASSACRE OF PULASKI'S INFANTRY — RETALIATION ON DONOP'S RANGERS — ARRIVAL OF ADMIRAL BYRON — ENDEAVORS TO ENTRAP D'ESTAING, BUT IS DISAPPOINTED — EXPEDITION AGAINST ST. LUCIA — EXPEDITION AGAINST GEORGIA — CAPTURE OF SAVANNAH — GEORGIA SUBDUED — GENERAL LINCOLN SENT TO COMMAND IN THE SOUTH.

WHILE hostilities were carried on in the customary form along the Atlantic borders, Indian warfare, with all its atrocity, was going on in the interior. The British post at Niagara was its cradle. It was the common rallying place of tories, refugees, savage warriors, and other desperadoes of the frontiers. Hither Brant, the noted Indian chief, had retired after the repulse of St. Leger at Fort Schuyler, to plan further mischief; and here was concerted the memorable incursion into the Valley of Wyoming, suggested by tory refugees, who had until recently inhabited it.

The Valley of Wyoming is a beautiful region lying along the Susquehanna. Peaceful as was its aspect, it had been the scene of sanguinary feuds prior to the Revolution, between the people of Pennsylvania and Connecticut, who both laid claim to it. Seven rural forts or block-houses, situated on various parts of the valley, had been strongholds during these territorial contests, and remained as places of refuge for women and children in times of Indian ravage.

The expedition now set on foot against it, in June, was composed of Butler's rangers, Johnson's royal greens, and Brant, with his Indian braves. Their united force, about eleven hundred strong, was conducted by Colonel John Butler, renowned in Indian warfare. Passing down the Chemung and Susquehanna in canoes, they landed at a place called Three Islands, struck through the wilderness to a gap or "notch" of the mountains, by which they entered the Valley of Wyoming. Butler made his head-quarters at one of the strongholds already mentioned, called Wintermoot's Fort, from a tory family of the same name. Hence he sent out his marauding parties to plunder and lay waste the country.

Rumors of this intended invasion had reached the valley some time before the appearance of the enemy, and had spread great consternation. Most of the sturdy yeomanry were absent in the army. A company of sixty men, enlisted under an act of Congress, and hastily and imperfectly organized, yet styling themselves regulars, took post at one of the strongholds called Forty Fort; where they were joined by about three hundred of the most efficient of the yeomanry, armed and equipped in rude rustic style. In this emergency old men and boys volunteered to meet the common danger, posting themselves in the smaller forts in which women and children had taken refuge. Colonel Zebulon Butler, an officer of the Continental army, took the general command. Several officers arrived from the army, having obtained leave to repair home for the protection of their families. They brought word that a re-enforcement, sent by Washington, was on its way.

In the mean time the marauding parties sent out by Butler and Brant were spreading desolation through the valley; farm-houses were wrapped in flames; husbandmen were murdered while at work in the fields; all who had not taken refuge in the fort were threatened with destruction. What was to be done? Wait for the arrival of the promised re-enforcement, or attempt to check the ravage? The latter was rashly determined on.

Leaving the women and children in Forty Fort, Colonel Zebulon Butler with his men sallied forth on the 3d of July, and made a rapid move upon Wintermoot Fort, hoping to come upon it by surprise. They found the enemy drawn up in front of it, in a line extending from the river to a marsh; Colonel John Butler and his rangers, with Johnson's royal Greens, on the left; Indians and Tories on the right.

The Americans formed a line of the same extent; the regulars under Colonel Butler on the right flank, resting on the river, the militia under Colonel Denison on the left wing, on the marsh. A sharp fire was opened from right to left; after a few volleys the enemy in front of Colonel Butler began to give way. The Indians, however, throwing themselves into the marsh, turned the left flank of the Americans, and attacked the militia in the rear. Denison, finding himself exposed to a cross fire, sought to change his position, and gave the word to fall back. It was mistaken for an order to retreat. In an instant the left wing turned and fled; all attempts to rally it were in vain; the panic extended to the right wing. The savages, throwing down their rifles, rushed on with tomahawks and scalping-knife, and a horrible massacre ensued. Some of

the Americans escaped to Forty Fort, some swam the river; others broke their way across the swamp, and climbed the mountain; some few were taken prisoners; but the greater number were slaughtered.

The desolation of the valley was now completed; fields were laid waste, houses burnt, and their inhabitants murdered. According to the British accounts, upwards of four hundred of the yeomanry of Wyoming were slain, but the women and children were spared, "and desired to retire to their rebel friends."<sup>1</sup>

Upwards of five thousand persons, says the same account, fled in the utmost distress and consternation, seeking refuge in the settlements on the Lehigh and the Delaware. After completing this horrible work of devastation, the enemy retired before the arrival of the troops detached by Washington.

We might have swelled our narrative of this affair by many individual acts of atrocity committed by royalists on their old friends and neighbors, and even their near relatives; but we forbear to darken our page by such stigmas on human nature. Suffice it to say, it was one of the most atrocious outrages perpetrated throughout the war; and, as usual, the tories concerned in it were the most vindictive and merciless of the savage crew. Of the measures taken in consequence we shall speak hereafter.

For a great part of the summer, Washington had remained encamped at White Plains, watching the movements of the enemy at New York. Early in September he observed a great stir of preparation; cannon and military stores were embarked, and a fleet of one hundred and forty transports were ready to make sail. What was their destination? Washington deplored the facility possessed by the enemy of transporting their troops from point to point by the sea. "Their rapid movements," said he, "enable them to give us solicitude for the safety of remote points, to succor which we should have to make ruinous marches, and after all, perhaps, find ourselves the dupes of a feint."

There were but two capital objects which they could have in view, beside the defeat and dispersion of his army. One was to get possession of the forts and passes of the Highlands; the other, by a junction of their land and naval forces, to attend the destruction of the French fleet at Boston, and regain possession of that town. These points were so far asunder, that

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<sup>1</sup> Gentleman's Magazine for 1778, p. 545.

it was difficult to protect the one, without leaving the other exposed. To do the best that the nature of the case would admit, Washington strengthened the works and re-enforced the garrison in the Highlands, stationing Putnam with two brigades in the neighborhood of West Point. General Gates was sent with three brigades to Danbury in Connecticut, where he was joined by two brigades under General McDougall, while Washington moved his camp to a rear position at Fredericksburg on the borders of Connecticut, and about thirty miles from West Point, so as to be ready for a movement to the eastward or a speedy junction for the defence of the Hudson. To facilitate an eastern movement he took measures to have all the roads leading to Boston repaired.

Scarcely had Washington moved from White Plains, when Sir Henry Clinton threw a detachment of five thousand men under Lord Cornwallis into the Jerseys, between the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers, and another of three thousand under Knyphausen into Westchester County, between the Hudson and the Bronx. These detachments held communication with each other, and by the aid of flat-bottomed boats could unite their forces in twenty-four hours, on either side of the Hudson.

Washington considered these mere foraging expeditions, though on a large scale, and detached troops into the Jerseys to co-operate with the militia in checking them; but, as something more might be intended, he ordered General Putnam to cross the river to West Point, for its immediate security: while he himself moved with a division of his army to Fishkill.

Wayne, who was with the detachment in the Jerseys, took post with a body of militia and a regiment of light horse in front of the division of Lord Cornwallis. The militia were quartered at the village of New Tappan; but Lieutenant-Colonel Baylor, who commanded the light horse, chose to encamp apart, to be free, as is supposed, from the control of Wayne. He took up his quarters, therefore, in Old Tappan, where his men lay very negligently and unguardedly in barns. Cornwallis had intelligence of their exposed situation, and laid a plan to cut off the whole detachment. A body of troops from Knyphausen's division was to cross the Hudson in the night, and come by surprise upon the militia in New Tappan: at the same time, Major-General Grey, of marauding renown, was to advance on the left, and attack Baylor and his dragoons in their careless quarters in Old Tappan.

Fortunately Knyphausen's troops, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, were slow in crossing the river, and the militia



were apprised by deserters of their danger in time to escape. Not so with Baylor's party. General Grey, having cut off a sergeant's patrol, advanced in silence, and surrounded with his troops three barns in which the dragoons were sleeping. We have seen, in his surprise of Wayne's detachment in the preceding year, how stealthy and effective he was in the work of destruction. To prevent noise he had caused his men to draw the charges and take the flints from their guns, and fix their bayonets. The bayonet was his favorite weapon. With this his men rushed forward, and deaf for a time to all cries for mercy, made a savage slaughter of naked and defenceless men. Eleven were killed on the spot, and twenty-five mangled with repeated thrusts, some receiving ten, twelve, and even sixteen wounds. Among the wounded were Colonel Baylor and Major Clough, the last of whom soon died. About forty were taken prisoners, mostly through the humane interposition of one of Grey's captains, whose feelings revolted at the orders of his sanguinary commander.

This whole movement of troops, on both sides of the Hudson, was designed to cover an expedition against Little Egg Harbor, on the east coast of New Jersey, a noted rendezvous of American privateers. It was conducted in much the same spirit with that of General Grey to the eastward. Three hundred regular troops, and a body of royalist volunteers from the Jerseys, headed by Captain Patrick Ferguson, embarked at New York on board galleys and transports, and made for Little Egg Harbor under convoy of vessels of war. They were long at sea. The country heard of their coming; four privateers put to sea and escaped; others took refuge up the river. The wind prevented the transports from entering. The troops embarked in row galleys and small craft, and pushed twenty miles up the river to the village of Chestnut Neck. Here were batteries without guns, prize ships which had been hastily scuttled, and store-houses for the reception of prize goods. The batteries and store-houses were demolished, the prize ships burnt, saltworks destroyed and private dwellings sacked and laid in ashes; all, it was pretended, being the property of persons concerned in privateering, or "whose activity in the cause of America and unrelenting persecution of the loyalists, marked them out as the proper objects of vengeance." As those persons were pointed out by the tory volunteers of New Jersey who accompanied the expedition, we may suppose how far private pique and neighborly feud entered into these proscriptions.

The vessels which brought this detachment being wind-bound for several days, Captain Ferguson had time for another enterprise. Among the forces detached by Washington into the Jerseys to check these ravages, was the Count Pulaski's legionary corps, composed of three companies of foot, and a troop of horse, officered principally by foreigners. A deserter from the corps brought word to the British commander that the legion was cantoned about twelve miles above the river; the infantry in three houses by themselves; Count Pulaski with the cavalry at some distance apart.

Informed of these circumstances, Captain Ferguson embarked in boats with two hundred and fifty men, ascended the river in the night, landed at four in the morning, and surrounded the houses in which the infantry were sleeping. "It being a night attack," says the captain in his official report, "little quarter of course could be given, *so there were only five prisoners.*" It was indeed a massacre similar to those of the bayonet-loving General Grey. Fifty of the infantry were butchered on the spot; among whom were two of the foreign officers, the Baron de Bose and Lieutenant de la Broderie.

The clattering of hoofs gave note of the approach of Pulaski and his horse, whereupon the British made a rapid retreat to their boats and pulled down the river, and thus ended the marauding expedition of Captain Ferguson, worthy of the times of the buccaneers. He attempted afterwards to excuse his wanton butchery of unarmed men, by alleging that the deserter from Pulaski's legion told him the count, in his general orders, forbade all granting of quarters; information which proved to be false, and which, had he been a gentleman of honorable spirit, he never would have believed, especially on the word of a deserter.

The detachment on the east side of the Hudson likewise made a predatory and disgraceful foray from their lines at King's Bridge, towards the American encampment at White Plains, plundering the inhabitants without discrimination, not only of their provisions and forage, but of the very clothes on their backs. None were more efficient in this ravage than a party of about one hundred of Captain Donop's Hessian yagers, and they were in full maraud between 'Tarrytown and Dobbs' Ferry, when a detachment of infantry under Colonel Richard Butler, and of cavalry under Major Henry Lee, came upon them by surprise, killed ten of them on the spot, captured a lieutenant and eighteen privates, and would have taken or destroyed the whole, had not the extreme roughness of the country impeded

the action of the cavalry, and enabled the yagers to escape by scrambling up hill-sides or plunging into ravines. This occurred but three days after the massacre of Colonel Baylor's party, on the opposite side of the Hudson.

The British detachments having accomplished the main objects of their movements, returned to New York; leaving those parts of the country they had harassed still more determined in their hostility, having achieved nothing but what is least honorable and most detestable in warfare. We need no better comment on these measures than one furnished by a British writer of the day. "Upon the whole," observes he, "even if the treaty between France and America had not rendered all hope of success from the present conciliatory system hopeless, these predatory and irritating expeditions would have appeared peculiarly ill-timed and unlucky. Though strongly and warmly recommended by many here as the most effectual mode of war, we scarcely remember an instance in which they have not been more mischievous than useful to the grand objects of either reducing or reconciling the provinces."<sup>1</sup>

We may add here that General Grey, who had signalized himself in these sanguinary exploits, and who from his stealthy precaution to insure the use of the bayonet, had acquired the surname of "no flint," was rewarded for a long career of military services by being raised to the peerage as Lord Grey of Howick, ultimately Earl Grey. He was father of the celebrated prime minister of that name.

About the middle of September Admiral Byron arrived at New York with the residue of the scattered armament, which had sailed from England in June to counteract the designs of the Count D'Estaing. Finding that the count was still repairing his shattered fleet in the harbor of Boston, he put to sea again as soon as his ships were refitted and set sail for that port to entrap him. Success seemed likely to crown his schemes: he arrived off Boston on the 1st of November: his rival was still in port. Scarcely had the admiral entered the bay, however, when another violent storm drove him out to sea, disabled his ships, and compelled him to put into Rhode Island to refit. Meanwhile the count having his ships in good order, and finding the coast clear, put to sea, and made the best of his way for the West Indies. Previous to his departure he issued a proclamation dated the 28th of October, addressed to the French inhabitants of Canada, inviting them to resume allegiance to

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<sup>1</sup> Ann. Register, 1778, p. 215.

their former sovereign. This was a measure in which he was not authorized by instructions from his government, and which was calculated to awaken a jealousy in the American mind as to the ultimate views of France in taking a part in this contest. It added to the chagrin occasioned by the failure of the expedition against Rhode Island, and the complete abandonment by the French of the coasts of the United States.

The force at New York, which had been an object of watchful solicitude, was gradually dispersed in different directions. Immediately after the departure of Admiral Byron for Boston, another naval expedition had been set on foot by Sir Henry Clinton. All being ready, a fleet of transports with five thousand men, under General Grant, convoyed by Commodore Hotham with a squadron of six ships-of-war, set sail on the 3d of November, with the secret design of an attack on St. Lucia.

Towards the end of the same month, another body of troops, under Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, sailed for Georgia in the squadron of Commodore Hyde Parker; the British cabinet having determined to carry the war into the Southern States. At the same time General Prevost, who commanded in Florida, was ordered by Sir Henry Clinton to march to the banks of the Savannah River, and attack Georgia in flank while the expedition under Campbell should attack it in front on the seaboard. We will briefly note the issue of these enterprises, so far beyond Washington's control.

The squadron of Commodore Hyde Parker anchored in the Savannah River towards the end of December. An American force of about six hundred regulars, and a few militia under General Robert Howe, were encamped near the town, being the remnant of an army with which that officer had invaded Florida in the preceding summer, but had been obliged to evacuate it by a mortal malady which desolated his camp.

Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell landed his troops on the 29th of December, about three miles below the town. The whole country bordering the river is a deep morass, cut up by creeks, and only to be traversed by causeways. Over one of these, six hundred yards in length, with a ditch on each side, Colonel Campbell advanced, putting to flight a small party stationed to guard it. General Howe had posted his little army on the main road with the river on his left and a morass in front. A negro gave Campbell information of a path leading through the morass, by which troops might get unobserved to the rear of the Americans. Sir James Baird was detached with the light infantry by this

path, while Colonel Campbell advanced in front. The Americans, thus suddenly attacked in front and rear, were completely routed; upward of one hundred were either killed on the spot, or perished in the morass; thirty-eight officers and four hundred and fifteen privates were taken prisoners, the rest retreated up the Savannah River and crossed into South Carolina. Savannah, the capital of Georgia, was taken possession of by the victors, with cannon, military stores and provisions; their loss was only seven killed and nineteen wounded.

Colonel Campbell conducted himself with great moderation; protecting the persons and property of the inhabitants, and proclaiming security and favor to all that should return to their allegiance. Numbers in consequence flocked to the British standard: the lower part of Georgia was considered as subdued, and posts were established by the British to maintain possession.

While Colonel Campbell had thus invaded Georgia in front, General Prevost, who commanded the British forces in Florida, had received orders from Sir Henry Clinton to take it in flank. He accordingly traversed deserts to its southern frontier, took Sunbury, the only remaining fort of importance, and marched to Savannah, where he assumed the general command, detaching Colonel Campbell against Augusta. By the middle of January (1779) all Georgia was reduced to submission.

A more experienced American general than Howe had by this time arrived to take command of the Southern Department, Major-General Lincoln, who had gained such reputation in the campaign against Burgoyne, and whose appointment to this station had been solicited by the delegates from South Carolina and Georgia. He had received his orders from Washington in the beginning of October. Of his operations at the South we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

WINTER CANTONMENTS OF THE AMERICAN ARMY — WASHINGTON AT MIDDLEBROOK — PLAN OF ALARM SIGNALS FOR THE JERSEYS — LAFAYETTE'S PROJECT FOR AN INVASION OF CANADA — FAVORED BY CONGRESS — CONDEMNED BY WASHINGTON IN PHILADELPHIA — THE WAR SPIRIT DECLINING — DISSENSIONS IN CONGRESS — SECTIONAL FEELINGS — PATRIOTIC APPEALS OF WASHINGTON — PLANS FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN — INDIAN ATROCITIES TO BE REPRESSED — AVENGING EXPEDITION SET ON FOOT — DISCONTENTS OF THE JERSEY TROOPS — APPEASED BY THE INTERFERENCE OF WASHINGTON — SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE INDIANS.

ABOUT the beginning of December, Washington distributed his troops for the winter in a line of strong cantonments extending from Long Island Sound to the Delaware. General Putnam commanded at Danbury, General McDougall in the Highlands, while the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief were near Middlebrook in the Jerseys. The objects of this arrangement were the protection of the country, the security of the important posts of the Hudson, and the safety, discipline, and easy subsistence of the army.

In the course of this winter he devised a plan of alarm signals, which General Philemon Dickinson was employed to carry into effect. On Bottle Hill, which commanded a vast map of country, sentinels kept watch day and night. Should there be an irruption of the enemy, an eighteen pounder, called the Old Sow, fired every half hour, gave the alarm in the day time or in dark and stormy nights; an immense fire or beacon at other times. On the booming of that heavy gun, lights sprang up from hill to hill along the different ranges of heights; the country was aroused, and the yeomanry, hastily armed, hurried to their gathering places.

Washington was now doomed to experience great loss in the narrow circle of those about him, on whose attachment and devotion he could place implicit reliance. The Marquis Lafayette, seeing no immediate prospect of active employment in the United States, and anticipating a war on the continent of Europe, was disposed to return to France to offer his services to his sovereign; desirous, however, of preserving a relation with America, he merely solicited from Congress the liberty of going

home for the next winter; engaging himself not to depart until certain that the campaign was over. Washington backed his application for a furlough, as an arrangement that would still link him with the service; expressing his reluctance to part with an officer who united "to all the military fire of youth an uncommon maturity of judgment." Congress in consequence granted the marquis an unlimited leave of absence, to return to America whenever he should find it convenient.

The marquis, in truth, was full of a grand project for the following summer's campaign, which he was anxious to lay before the cabinet of Versailles; it was to effect the conquest of Canada by the combined forces, naval and military, of France and the United States. Of course it embraced a wide scope of operations. One body of American troops was to be directed against Detroit; another against Niagara; a third was to seize Oswego, launch a flotilla, and get command of Lake Ontario; and a fourth to penetrate Canada by the river St. Francis, and secure Montreal and the posts on Lake Champlain. While the Americans thus invaded Upper Canada, a French fleet with five thousand men was to ascend the St. Lawrence, and make an attack on Quebec. The scheme met the approbation of a great majority in Congress, who ordered it to be communicated to Dr. Franklin, then minister at Paris, to be laid by him before the French cabinet. Previous to a final determination, the House prudently consulted the opinion of the commander-in-chief. Washington opposed the scheme, both by letter and in a personal interview with Congress, as too complicated and extensive, and requiring too great resources in men and money to be undertaken with a prospect of success. He opposed it also on political grounds. Though it had apparently originated in a proposition of the Marquis Lafayette, it might have had its birth in the French cabinet, with a view to some ulterior object. He suggested the danger of introducing a large body of French troops into Canada, and putting them in possession of the capital of a province attached to them by all the ties of blood, habits, manners, religion, and former connection of government. Let us realize for a moment, said he, the striking advantages France would derive from the possession of Canada; an extensive territory, abounding in supplies for the use of her islands; a vast source of the most beneficial commerce with the Indian nations, which she might then monopolize; ports of her own on this Continent independent of the precarious good-will of an ally; the whole trade of Newfoundland whenever she pleased to engross it, the finest

nursery for seamen in the world; and finally, the facility of awing and controlling these States, the natural and most formidable rival of every maritime power in Europe. All these advantages he feared might prove too great a temptation to be resisted by any power actuated by the common maxims of national policy; and, with all his confidence in the favorable sentiments of France, he did not think it politic to subject her disinterestedness to such a trial. "To waive every other consideration," said he, grandly, in the conclusion of a letter to the President of Congress, "I do not like to add to the number of our national obligations. I would wish, as much as possible, to avoid giving a foreign power new claims of merit for services performed to the United States, and would ask no assistance that is not indispensable."

The strenuous and far-seeing opposition of Washington was at length effectual; and the magnificent, but hazardous scheme, was entirely, though slowly and reluctantly abandoned. It appears since, that the cabinet of France had really no hand either in originating or promoting it; but, on the contrary, was opposed to any expedition against Canada; and the instructions to their minister forbade him to aid in any such scheme of conquest.

Much of the winter was passed by Washington in Philadelphia, occupied in devising and discussing plans for the campaign of 1779. It was an anxious moment with him. Circumstances which inspired others with confidence, filled him with solicitude. The alliance with France had produced a baneful feeling of security, which, it appeared to him, was paralyzing the energies of the country. England, it was thought, would now be too much occupied in securing her position in Europe, to increase her force or extend her operations in America. Many, therefore, considered the war as virtually at an end; and were unwilling to make the sacrifices, or supply the means necessary for important military undertakings.

Dissensions, too, and party feuds were breaking out in Congress, owing to the relaxation of that external pressure of a common and imminent danger, which had heretofore produced a unity of sentiment and action. That august body had, in fact, greatly deteriorated since the commencement of the war. Many of those whose names had been as watchwords at the Declaration of Independence, had withdrawn from the national councils; occupied either by their individual affairs, or by the affairs of their individual States. Washington, whose comprehensive patriotism embraced the whole Union, deprecated



and deplored the dawning of this sectional spirit. America, he declared, had never stood more in need of the wise, patriotic, and spirited exertions of her sons than at this period. The States, separately, were too much engaged in their local concerns, and had withdrawn too many of their ablest men from the general council, for the good of the common weal. "Our political system," observed he, "is like the mechanism of a clock; it is useless to keep the smaller wheels in order, if the greater one, the prime mover of the whole, is neglected." It was his wish, therefore, that each State should not only choose, but also compel its ablest men to attend Congress, instructed to investigate and reform public abuses.

Nothing can exceed his appeal to the patriotism of his native State, Virginia, in a letter to Colonel Harrison, the speaker of its House of Delegates, written on the 30th December. "Our affairs are in a more distressed, ruinous, and deplorable condition than they have been since the commencement of the war. By a faithful laborer, then, in the cause; by a man who is daily injuring his private estate without the smallest earthly advantage, not common to all in case of a favorable issue to the dispute; by one who wishes the prosperity of America most devotedly, but sees it, or thinks he sees it on the brink of ruin; you are besought most earnestly, my dear Colonel Harrison, to exert yourself in endeavoring to rescue your country, by sending your best and ablest men to Congress. These characters must not slumber nor sleep at home in such a time of pressing danger. They must not content themselves with the enjoyment of places of honor or profit in their own State, while the common interests of America are mouldering and sinking into irretrievable ruin. . . . If I were to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and of men, from what I have seen, heard, and in part know, I should in one word say, that idleness, dissipation, and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them; that speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches, seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and almost of every order of men; the party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day; while the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulating debt, ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit, which in its consequence is the want of every thing, are but secondary considerations, and postponed from day to day, from week to week, as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect. . . . In the present situation of things, I cannot help asking where are Mason,

Wythe, Jefferson, Nicholson, Pendleton, Nelson, and another I could name? And why, if you are sufficiently impressed with your danger, do you not, as New York has done in the case of Mr. Jay, send an extra member or two, for at least a limited time, till the great business of the nation is put upon a more respectable and happy establishment? . . . I confess to you I feel more real distress on account of the present appearance of things, than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute."

Nothing seems to have disgusted him more during his visit to Philadelphia, than the manner in which the concerns of the patriot camp were forgotten amid the revelry of the capital. "An assembly, a concert, a dinner, a supper, that will cost three or four hundred pounds, will not only take men off from acting in this business, but even from thinking of it; while a great part of the officers of our army, from absolute necessity, are quitting the service, and the more virtuous few, rather than do this, are sinking by sure degrees into beggary and want."

In discussing the policy to be observed in the next campaign, Washington presumed the enemy would maintain their present posts, and conduct the war as heretofore; in which case he was for remaining entirely on the defensive; with the exception of such minor operations as might be necessary to check the ravages of the Indians. The country, he observed, was in a languid and exhausted state, and had need of repose. The interruption to agricultural pursuits, and the many hands abstracted from husbandry by military service, had produced a scarcity of bread and forage, and rendered it difficult to subsist large armies. Neither was it easy to recruit these armies. There was abundance of employment; wages were high, the value of money was low; consequently there was but little temptation to enlist. Plans had been adopted to remedy the deranged state of the currency, but they would be slow in operation. Great economy must in the mean time be observed in the public expenditure.

The participation of France in the war, also, and the prospect that Spain would soon be embroiled with England, must certainly divide the attention of the enemy, and allow America a breathing time; these and similar considerations were urged by Washington in favor of a defensive policy. One single exception was made by him. The horrible ravages and massacres perpetrated by the Indians and their tory allies at Wyoming, had been followed by similar atrocities at Cherry Valley, in the State of New York, and called for signal vengeance to

prevent a repetition. Washington knew by experience that Indian warfare, to be effective, should never be merely defensive, but must be carried into the enemy's country. The Six Nations, the most civilized of the savage tribes, had proved themselves the most formidable. His idea was to make war upon them in their own style; penetrate their country, lay waste their villages and settlements, and at the same time destroy the British post at Niagara, that nestling-place of Tories and refugees.

The policy thus recommended was adopted by Congress. An expedition was set on foot to carry that part relative to the Indians into execution: but here a circumstance occurred, which Washington declared gave him more pain than any thing that had happened in the war. A Jersey brigade being ordered to march, the officers of the first regiment hesitated to obey. By the depreciation of paper money, their pay was incompetent to their support; it was, in fact, merely nominal; the consequence was, as they alleged, that they were loaded with debt, and their families at home were starving; yet the Legislature of their State turned a deaf ear to their complaints. Thus aggrieved, they addressed a remonstrance to the Legislature on the subject of their pay, intimating that, should it not receive the immediate attention of that body, they might, at the expiration of three days, be considered as having resigned, and officers might be appointed in their place.

Here was one of the many dilemmas which called for the judgment, moderation, and great personal weight and influence of Washington. He was eminently the soldier's friend, but he was no less thoroughly the patriot general. He knew and felt the privations and distresses of the army, and the truth of the grievances complained of; but he saw, also, the evil consequences that might result from such a course as that which the officers had adopted. Acting, therefore, as a mediator, he corroborated the statements of the complainants on the one hand, urging on government the necessity of a more general and adequate provision for the officers of the army, and the danger of subjecting them to too severe and continued privations. On the other hand, he represented to the officers the difficulties with which government itself had to contend from a deranged currency and exhausted resources; and the unavoidable delays that consequently impeded its moneyed operations. He called upon them, therefore, for a further exertion of that patience and perseverance which had hitherto done them the highest honor at home and abroad, and inspired him with unlimited confidence in their virtue, and consoled him amidst every

perplexity and reverse of fortune to which the national affairs had been exposed. "Now that we have made so great a progress to the attainment of the end we have in view," observed he, "any thing like a change of conduct would imply a very unhappy change of principle, and a forgetfulness, as well of what we owe to ourselves, as to our country. Did I suppose it possible this could be the case even in a single regiment of the army, I should be mortified and chagrined beyond expression. I should feel it as a wound given to my own honor, which I consider as embarked with that of the army at large.

"But the gentlemen," adds he, "cannot be in earnest; they cannot seriously intend any thing that would be a stain on their former reputation. They have only reasoned wrong about the means of obtaining a good end; and on consideration, I hope and flatter myself, they will renounce what must appear to be improper. At the opening of a campaign, when under marching orders for an important service, their own honor, duty to the public and to themselves, and a regard to military propriety will not suffer them to persist in a measure which would be a violation of them all. It will even wound their delicacy, coolly to reflect that they have hazarded a step which has an air of dictating to their country, by taking advantage of the necessity of the moment; for the declaration they have made to the State, at so critical a time, that unless they obtain relief in the short period of three days, they must be considered out of the service, has very much that aspect."

These and other observations of similar purport, were contained in a letter to General Maxwell, their commander, to be laid before the officers. It produced a respectful reply, but one which intimated no disposition to swerve from their determination. After reiterating their grievances, "we are sorry," added they, "that you should imagine we meant to disobey orders. It was and is still our determination to march with our regiment, and to do the duty of officers until the Legislature shall have a reasonable time to appoint others, but no longer. We beg leave to assure your Excellency, that we have the highest sense of your ability and virtues; that executing your orders has ever given us pleasure; that we love the service, and love our country; — but when that country gets so lost to virtue and justice, as to forget to support its servants, it then becomes their duty to retire from its service."

A commander of less magnanimity than Washington, would have answered this letter by a stern exercise of military rule, and driven the really aggrieved parties to extremity. He nobly

contented himself with the following comment on it, forming a paragraph of a letter to General Maxwell. "I am sorry the gentlemen persist in the principles which dictated the step they have taken; as, the more the affair unfolds itself, the more reason I see to disapprove it. But in the present view they have of the matter, and with their present feelings, it is not probable any new argument that could be offered would have more influence than the former. While, therefore, the gentlemen continue in the execution of their duty, as they declare themselves heartily disposed to do, I shall only regret that they have taken a step of which they must hereafter see the impropriety."

The Legislature of New Jersey imitated the forbearance of Washington. Compounding with their pride, they let the officers know that on their withdrawing the memorial, the subject matter of it would be promptly attended to: It was withdrawn. Resolutions were immediately passed, granting pecuniary supplies to both officers and soldiers. The money was forthwith forwarded to camp, and the brigade marched.

Such was the paternal spirit exercised by Washington, in all the difficulties and discontents of the army. How clearly he understood the genius and circumstances of the people he was called upon to manage; and how truly was he their protector even more than their commander!

We shall briefly dispose of the Indian campaign. The first act was an expedition from Fort Schuylcr by Colonel Van Schaick, Lieutenant-Colonel Willett, and Major Cochran, with about six hundred men, who, on the 19th of April, surprised the towns of the Onondagas; destroyed the whole settlement, and returned to the fort without the loss of a single man.

The great expedition of the campaign, however, was in revenge of the massacre of Wyoming. Early in the summer, three thousand men assembled in that lately desolated region, and, conducted by General Sullivan, moved up the west branch of the Susquehanna into the Seneca country. While on the way, they were joined by a part of the western army, under General James Clinton, who had come from the valley of the Mohawk by Otsego lake and the east branch of the Susquehanna. The united forces amounted to about five thousand men, of which Sullivan had the general command.

The Indians, and their allies the Tories, had received information of the intended invasion, and appeared in arms to oppose it. They were much inferior in force, however, being about fifteen hundred Indians and two hundred white men, com-

manded by the two Butlers, Johnson, and Brant. A battle took place at Newtown on the 29th of August, in which they were easily defeated. Sullivan then pushed forward into the heart of the Indian country, penetrating as far as the Genesee River, laying every thing waste, setting fire to deserted dwellings, destroying cornfields, orchards, gardens, every thing that could give sustenance to man, the design being to starve the Indians out of the country. The latter retreated before him with their families, and at length took refuge under the protection of the British garrison at Niagara. Having completed his errand, Sullivan returned to Easton in Pennsylvania. The thanks of Congress were voted to him and his army, but he shortly afterward resigned his commission on account of ill health, and retired from the service.

A similar expedition was undertaken by Colonel Brodhead, from Pittsburg up the Allegany, against the Mingo, Muncey, and Seneca tribes, with similar results. The wisdom of Washington's policy of carrying the war against the Indians into their country, and conducting it in their own way, was apparent from the general intimidation produced among the tribes by these expeditions, and the subsequent infrequency of their murderous incursions; the instigation of which by the British had been the most inhuman feature of this war.

## CHAPTER XIX.

PREDATORY WARFARE OF THE ENEMY — RAVAGES IN THE CHESAPEAKE — HOSTILITIES ON THE HUDSON — VERPLANCK'S POINT AND STONY POINT TAKEN — CAPTURE OF NEW HAVEN — FAIRFIELD AND NORWALK DESTROYED — WASHINGTON PLANS A COUNTER-STROKE — STORMING OF STONY POINT — GENEROUS LETTER OF LEE.

THE situation of Sir Henry Clinton must have been mortifying in the extreme to an officer of lofty ambition and generous aims. His force, between sixteen and seventeen thousand strong, was superior in number, discipline, and equipment to that of Washington; yet his instructions confined him to a predatory warfare, carried on by attacks and marauds at distant points, harassing, it is true, yet irritating to the country intended to be conciliated, and brutalizing to his own soldiery. Such was the nature of an expedition set on foot against the

commerce of the Chesapeake; by which commerce the armies were supplied and the credit of the government sustained. On the 9th of May, a squadron under Sir George Collier, convoying transports and galleys, with twenty-five hundred men, commanded by General Mathews, entered these waters, took possession of Portsmouth without opposition, sent out armed parties against Norfolk, Suffolk, Gosport, Kemp's Landing, and other neighboring places, where were immense quantities of provisions, naval and military stores, and merchandise of all kinds; with numerous vessels, some on the stocks, others richly laden. Wherever they went, a scene of plunder, conflagration, and destruction ensued. A few days sufficed to ravage the whole neighborhood.

While this was going on at the South, Washington received intelligence of movements at New York and in its vicinity, which made him apprehend an expedition against the Highlands of the Hudson.

Since the loss of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, the main defences of the Highlands had been established at the sudden bend of the river where it winds between West Point and Constitution Island. Two opposite forts commanded this bend, and an iron chain which was stretched across it.

Washington had projected two works also just below the Highlands, at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, to serve as outworks of the mountain passes, and to protect King's Ferry, the most direct and convenient communication between the Northern and Middle States.

A small but strong fort had been erected on Verplanck's Point, and was garrisoned by seventy men under Captain Armstrong. A more important work was in progress at Stony Point. When completed, these two forts, on opposite promontories, would form as it were the lower gates of the Highlands; miniature Pillars of Hercules, of which Stony Point was the Gibraltar.

To be at hand in case of any real attempt upon the Highlands, Washington drew up with his forces in that direction; moving by the way of Morristown.

An expedition up the Hudson was really the object of Sir Henry Clinton's movements, and for this he was strengthened by the return of Sir George Collier with his marauding ships and forces from Virginia. On the 30th of May, Sir Henry set out on his second grand cruise up the Hudson, with an armament of about seventy sail, great and small, and one hundred and fifty flat boats. Admiral Sir George Collier com-

manded the armament, and there was a land force of about five thousand men under General Vaughan.

The first aim of Sir Henry was to get possession of Stony and Verplanck's Points; his former expedition had acquainted him with the importance of this pass of the river. On the morning of the 31st, the forces were landed in two divisions, the largest under General Vaughan, on the east side of the river, about seven or eight miles below Verplanck's Point; the other, commanded by Sir Henry in person, landed in Haverstraw Bay, about three miles below Stony Point. There were about thirty men in the unfinished fort; they abandoned it on the approach of the enemy, and retreated into the Highlands, having first set fire to the block-house. The British took quiet possession of the fort in the evening; dragged up cannon and mortars in the night, and at daybreak opened a furious fire upon Fort Lafayette. It was cannonaded at the same time by the armed vessels, and a demonstration was made on it by the division under General Vaughan. Thus surrounded, the little garrison of seventy men was forced to surrender, with no other stipulation than safety to their persons and to the property they had in the fort. Major André was aide-de-camp to Sir Henry, and signed the articles of capitulation.

Sir Henry Clinton stationed garrisons in both posts, and set to work with great activity to complete the fortification of Stony Point. His troops remained for several days in two divisions on the opposite sides of the river; the fleet generally fell down a little below King's Ferry; some of the square-rigged vessels, however, with others of a smaller size, and flat-bottomed boats, having troops on board, dropped down Haverstraw Bay, and finally disappeared behind the promontories which advance across the upper part of the Tappan Sea.

Some of the movements of the enemy perplexed Washington exceedingly. He presumed, however, that the main object of Sir Henry was to get possession of West Point, the guardian fortress of the river, and that the capture of Stony and Verplanck's Points were preparatory steps. He would fain have dislodged him from these posts, which cut off all communication by the way of King's Ferry, but they were too strong; he had not the force nor military apparatus necessary. Deferring any attempt on them for the present, he took measures for the protection of West Point. Leaving General Putnam and the main body of the army at Smith's Clove, a mountain pass in the rear of Haverstraw, he removed his head-



quarters to New Windsor, to be near West Point in case of need, and to press the completion of its works. General McDougall was transferred to the command of the Point. Three brigades were stationed at different places on the opposite side of the river, under General Heath, from which fatigue parties crossed daily to work on the fortifications.

This strong disposition of the American forces checked Sir Henry's designs against the Highlands. Contenting himself, therefore, for the present, with the acquisition of Stony and Verplanck's Points, he returned to New York; where he soon set on foot a desolating expedition along the seaboard of Connecticut. That State, while it furnished the American armies with provisions and recruits, and infested the sea with privateers, had hitherto experienced nothing of the horrors of war within its borders. Sir Henry, in compliance with his instructions from government, was now about to give it a scourging lesson; and he entertained the hope that, in so doing, he might draw down Washington from his mountain fastnesses, and lay open the Hudson to a successful incursion.

General (late Governor) Tryon, was the officer selected by Sir Henry for this inglorious, but apparently congenial service. About the beginning of July he embarked with two thousand six hundred men, in a fleet of transports and tenders, and was convoyed up the Sound by Sir George Collier with two ships-of-war.

On the 5th of July, the troops landed near New Haven, in two divisions, one led by Tryon, the other by Brigadier-General Garth, his lieutenant. They came upon the neighborhood by surprise; yet the militia assembled in haste, and made a resolute though ineffectual opposition. The British captured the town, dismantled the fort, and took or destroyed all the vessels in the harbor: with all the artillery, ammunition, and public stores. Several private houses were plundered; but this, it was said, was done by the soldiery contrary to orders. The enemy, in fact, claimed great credit for lenity in refraining from universal sackage, considering the opposition they had experienced while on the march, and that some of the inhabitants of the town had fired upon them from the windows.

They next proceeded to Fairfield; where, meeting with greater resistance, they thought the moment arrived for a wholesome example of severity. Accordingly, they not merely ravaged and destroyed the public stores and the vessels in the harbor, but laid the town itself in ashes. The exact return of

this salutary lesson gives the destruction of ninety-seven dwelling-houses, sixty-seven barns and stables, forty-eight store-houses, three places of worship, a court-house, a jail, and two school-houses.

The sight of their homes laid desolate, and their dwellings wrapped in flames, only served to exasperate the inhabitants, and produce a more determined opposition to the progress of the destroyers; whereupon the ruthless ravage of the latter increased as they advanced.

At Norwalk, where they landed on the 11th of July, they burnt one hundred and thirty dwelling-houses, eighty-seven barns, twenty-two store-houses, seventeen shops, four mills, two places of worship, and five vessels which were in the harbor. All this was private property, and the loss fell on individuals engaged in the ordinary occupations of life. These acts of devastation were accompanied by atrocities, inevitable where the brutal passions of the soldiery are aroused. They were unprovoked, too, by any unusual acts of hostility, the militia having no time to assemble, excepting in small parties for the defence of their homes and firesides. The loss of the British throughout the whole expedition amounted, according to their own accounts, to twenty killed, ninety-six wounded, and thirty-two missing.

It was intended to crown this grand ravage by a descent on New London, a noted rendezvous of privateers: but as greater opposition was expected there than at either of the other places, the squadron returned to Huntington Bay, on Long Island, to await re-enforcements; and Commodore Collier proceeded to Throg's Neck, to confer with Sir Henry Clinton about further operations.

In this conference Sir Henry was assured that the recent expedition was producing the most salutary effects; that the principal inhabitants were incensed at the apathy of Washington in remaining encamped near the Hudson, while their country was ravished and their homes laid in ashes; that they complained equally of Congress, and talked of withdrawing from it their allegiance, and making terms with British commanders for themselves; finally, it was urged that the proposed expedition against New London would carry these salutary effects still further and confirm the inhabitants in the sentiments they were beginning to express.

Such were the delusive representations continually made to the British commanders in the course of this war; or rather, such were the delusions in which they themselves indulged, and

which led them to the commission of acts calculated to rend still further asunder the kindred countries.

Washington, however, was not culpable of the apathy ascribed to him. On hearing of the departure of the expedition to the eastward, and before he was acquainted with its definite object, he detached General Heath, with two brigades of Connecticut militia, to counteract the movements of the enemy. This was all that he could spare from the force stationed for the protection of the Highlands. Any weakening of his posts there might bring the enemy suddenly upon him, such was their facility in moving from one place to another by means of their shipping. Indeed, he had divined that a scheme of the kind was at the bottom of the hostile movement to the eastward.

As a kind of counter-check to Sir Henry, he had for some days been planning the recapture of Stony Point and Fort Lafayette. He had reconnoitred them in person; spies had been thrown into them, and information collected from deserters. Stony Point having been recently strengthened by the British, was now the most important. It was a rocky promontory advancing far into the Hudson, which washed three sides of it. A deep morass, covered at high water, separated it from the mainland, but at low tide might be traversed by a narrow causeway and bridge. The promontory was crowned by strong works, furnished with heavy ordnance, commanding the morass and causeway. Lower down were two rows of abatis, and the shore at the foot of the hill could be swept by vessels of war anchored in the river. The garrison was about six hundred strong, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Johnson.

To attempt the surprisal of this isolated post, thus strongly fortified, was a perilous enterprise. General Wayne, Mad Anthony as he was called from his daring valor, was the officer to whom Washington proposed it, and he engaged in it with avidity.<sup>1</sup> According to Washington's plan, it was to be attempted by light infantry only, at night, and with the utmost secrecy, securing every person they met to prevent discovery. Between one or two hundred chosen men and officers were to make the surprise; preceded by a vanguard of prudent, determined men, well commanded, to remove obstructions, secure sentries, and drive in the guards. The whole was to advance with fixed bayonets and unloaded muskets; all was to be done with the bayonet. These parties were to be fol-

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<sup>1</sup> It is a popular tradition, that when Washington proposed to Wayne the storming of Stony Point, the reply was, "General, I'll storm it—*if you will only plan it.*"

lowed by the main body, at a small distance, to support and re-enforce them, or to bring them off in case of failure. All were to wear white cockades or feathers, and to have a watchword, so as to be distinguished from the enemy. "The usual time for exploits of this kind," observes Washington, "is a little before day, for which reason a vigilant officer is then more on the watch. I therefore recommend a midnight hour."

On getting possession of Stony Point, Wayne was to turn its guns upon Fort Lafayette and the shipping. A detachment was to march down from West Point by Peekskill, to the vicinity of Fort Lafayette, and hold itself ready to join in the attack upon it, as soon as the cannonade began from Stony Point.

On the 15th of July, about mid-day, Wayne set out with his light infantry from Sand Beach, fourteen miles distant from Stony Point. The roads were rugged, across mountains, morasses, and narrow defiles, in the skirts of the Dunderberg, where frequently it was necessary to proceed in single file. About eight in the evening, they arrived within a mile and a half of the forts, without being discovered. Not a dog barked to give the alarm—all the dogs in the neighborhood had been privately destroyed beforehand. Bringing the men to a halt, Wayne and his principal officers went nearer, and carefully reconnoitred the works and their environs, so as to proceed understandingly and without confusion. Having made their observations they returned to the troops. Midnight, it will be recollected, was the time recommended by Washington for the attack. About half-past eleven, the whole moved forward guided by a negro of the neighborhood who had frequently carried in fruit to the garrison, and served the Americans as a spy. He led the way, accompanied by two stout men disguised as farmers. The countersign was given to the first sentinel, posted on high ground west of the morass. While the negro talked with him, the men seized and gagged him. The sentinel posted at the head of the causeway was served in the same manner; so that hitherto no alarm was given. The causeway, however, was overflowed, and it was some time after twelve o'clock before the troops could cross; leaving three hundred men under General Muhlenberg, on the western side of the morass, as a reserve.

At the foot of the promontory, the troops were divided into two columns, for simultaneous attacks on opposite sides of the works. One hundred and fifty volunteers, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury, seconded by Major Posey, formed the vanguard

of the right column. One hundred volunteers under Major Stewart, the vanguard of the left. In advance of each was a forlorn hope of twenty men, one led by Lieutenant Gibbon, the other by Lieutenant Knox; it was their desperate duty to remove the abatis. So well had the whole affair been conducted, that the Americans were close upon the outworks before they were discovered. There was then severe skirmishing at the pickets. The Americans used the bayonet; the others discharged their muskets. The reports roused the garrison. Stony Point was instantly in an uproar. The drums beat to arms; every one hurried to his alarm post; the works were hastily manned, and a tremendous fire of grape-shot and musketry opened upon the assailants.

The two columns forced their way with the bayonet, at opposite points, surmounting every obstacle. Colonel Fleury was the first to enter the fort and strike the British flag. Major Posey sprang to the ramparts and shouted, "The fort is our own." Wayne, who led the right column, received at the inner abatis a contusion on the head from a musket ball, and would have fallen to the ground, but his two aides-de-camp supported him. Thinking it was a death wound, "Carry me into the fort," said he, "and let me die at the head of my column." He was borne in between his aides, and soon recovered his self-possession. The two columns arrived nearly at the same time, and met in the centre of the works. The garrison surrendered at discretion.

At daybreak, as Washington directed, the guns of the fort were turned on Fort Lafayette and the shipping. The latter cut their cables and dropped down the river. Through a series of blunders, the detachment from West Point, which was to have co-operated, did not arrive in time, and came unprovided with suitable ammunition for their battering artillery. This part of the enterprise, therefore, failed; Fort Lafayette held out.

The storming of Stony Point stands out in high relief, as one of the most brilliant achievements of the war. The Americans had effected it without firing a musket. On their part, it was the silent, deadly work of the bayonet; the fierce resistance they met at the outset may be judged by the havoc made in their forlorn hope; out of twenty-two men, seventeen were either killed or wounded. The whole loss of the Americans was fifteen killed and eighty-three wounded. Of the garrison, sixty-three were slain, including two officers; five hundred and fifty-three were taken prisoners, among whom were a

lieutenant-colonel, four captains, and twenty-three subaltern officers.

Wayne, in his despatches, writes: "The humanity of our brave soldiery, who scorned to take the lives of a vanquished foe when calling for mercy, reflects the highest honor on them, and accounts for the few of the enemy killed on the occasion." His words reflect honor on himself.

A British historian confirms his eulogy. "The conduct of the Americans upon this occasion was highly meritorious," writes he; "for they would have been fully justified in putting the garrison to the sword; not one man of which was put to death but in fair combat."<sup>1</sup>

We are happy to record an instance of generous feeling on the part of General Charles Lee, in conjunction with Stony Point. When he heard of Wayne's achievement, he wrote to him as follows: "What I am going to say, you will not, I hope, consider as paying my court in this hour of your glory; for, as it is at least my present intention to leave this continent, I can have no interest in paying my court to any individual. What I shall say, therefore, is dictated by the genuine feelings of my heart. I do most sincerely declare, that your assault of Stony Point is not only the most brilliant, in my opinion, throughout the whole course of the war on either side, but that it is the most brilliant I am acquainted with in history; the assault of Schweidnitz by Marshal Laudon, I think inferior to it. I wish you, therefore, most sincerely, joy of the laurels you have deservedly acquired, and that you may long live to wear them."

This is the more magnanimous on the part of Lee, as Wayne had been the chief witness against him in the court-martial after the affair of Monmouth, greatly to his annoyance. While Stony Point, therefore, stands a lasting monument of the daring courage of "Mad Anthony," let it call up the remembrance of this freak of generosity on the part of the eccentric Lee.

Tidings of the capture of Stony Point, and the imminent danger of Fort Lafayette, reached Sir Henry Clinton just after his conference with Sir George Collier at Throg's Neck. The expedition against New London was instantly given up; the transports and troops were recalled; a forced march was made to Dobbs' Ferry on the Hudson; a detachment was sent up the river in transports to relieve Fort Lafayette, and Sir Henry followed with a greater force, hoping Washington might quit his fastness, and risk a battle for the possession of Stony Point.

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman, vol. i. p. 146.

Again the Fabian policy of the American commander-in-chief disappointed the British general. Having well examined the post in company with an engineer and several general officers, he found that at least fifteen hundred men would be required to maintain it, a number not to be spared from the army at present.

The works, too, were only calculated for defence on the land side, and were open towards the river, where the enemy depended upon protection from their ships. It would be necessary to construct them anew, with great labor. The army, also, would have to be in the vicinity, too distant from West Point to aid in completing or defending its fortifications, and exposed to the risk of a general action on unfavorable terms.

For these considerations, in which all his officers concurred, Washington evacuated the post on the 18th, removing the cannon and stores, and destroying the works; after which he drew his forces together in the Highlands, and established his quarters at West Point, not knowing but that Sir Henry might attempt a retaliatory stroke on that most important fortress. The latter retook possession of Stony Point, and fortified and garrisoned it more strongly than ever, but was too wary to risk an attempt upon the strongholds of the Highlands. Finding Washington was not to be tempted out of them, he ordered the transports to fall once more down the river, and returned to his former encampment at Philipsburg.

## CHAPTER XX.

EXPEDITION AGAINST PENOBSCOT — NIGHT SURPRISAL OF PAULUS HOOK — WASHINGTON FORTIFIES WEST POINT — HIS STYLE OF LIVING THERE — TABLE AT HEAD-QUARTERS — SIR HENRY CLINTON RE-ENFORCED — ARRIVAL OF D'ESTAING ON THE COAST OF GEORGIA — PLANS IN CONSEQUENCE — THE FRENCH MINISTER AT WASHINGTON'S HIGHLAND CAMP — LETTER TO LAFAYETTE — D'ESTAING CO-OPERATES WITH LINCOLN — REPULSED AT SAVANNAH — WASHINGTON RE-ENFORCES LINCOLN — GOES INTO WINTER QUARTERS — SIR HENRY CLINTON SENDS AN EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTH.

The brilliant affair of the storming of Stony Point, was somewhat overshadowed by the result of an enterprise at the eastward, undertaken without consulting Washington. A Brit-

ish detachment from Halifax of seven or eight hundred men, had founded in June a military post on the eastern side of the Bay of Penobscot, nine miles below the river of that name, and were erecting a fort there, intended to protect Nova Scotia, control the frontiers of Massachusetts, and command the vast wooded regions of Maine, whence inexhaustible supplies of timber might be procured for the royal shipyards at Halifax and elsewhere.

The people of Boston, roused by this movement, which invaded their territory, and touched their pride and interests, undertook, on their own responsibility, a naval and military expedition intended to drive off the invaders. All Boston was in a military bustle, enrolling militia and volunteers. An embargo of forty days was laid on the shipping, to facilitate the equipment of the naval armament; a squadron of armed ships and brigantines under Commodore Saltonstall, at length put to sea, convoying transports, on board of which were near four thousand land troops under General Lovel.

Arriving in the Penobscot on the 25th of May, they found Colonel Maclean posted on a peninsula, steep and precipitous toward the bay, and deeply trenched on the land side with three ships-of-war anchored before it.

Lovel was repulsed, with some little loss, in an attempt to effect a landing on the peninsula; but finally succeeded before daybreak on the 28th. The moment was propitious for a bold and vigorous blow. The fort was but half finished; the guns were not mounted; the three armed vessels could not have offered a formidable resistance; but, unfortunately, the energy of a Wayne was wanting to the enterprise. Lovel proceeded by regular siege. He threw up works at seven hundred and fifty yards distance, and opened a cannonade, which was continued from day to day, for a fortnight. The enemy availed themselves of the delay to strengthen their works, in which they were aided by men from the ships. Distrustful of the efficiency of the militia and of their continuance in camp, Lovel sent to Boston for a re-enforcement of Continental troops. He only awaited their arrival to carry the place by storm. A golden opportunity was lost by this excess of caution. It gave time for Admiral Collier at New York to hear of this enterprise, and take measures for its defeat.

On the 13th of August, Lovel was astounded by intelligence that the admiral was arrived before the bay with a superior armament. Thus fairly entrapped, he endeavored to extricate his force with as little loss as possible. Before news of Collier's arrival could reach the fort, he re-embarked his troops in



the transports to make their escape up the river. His armed vessels were drawn up in a crescent as if to give battle, but it was merely to hold the enemy in check. They soon gave way; some were captured, others were set on fire or blown up, and abandoned by their crews. The transports being eagerly pursued and in great danger of being taken, disgorged the troops and seamen on the wild shores of the river: whence they had to make the best of their way to Boston, struggling for upwards of a hundred miles through a pathless wilderness, before they reached the settled parts of the country; and several of them perishing through hunger and exhaustion.

If Washington was chagrined by the signal failure of this expedition, undertaken without his advice, he was cheered by the better fortune of one set on foot about the same time, under his own eye, by his young friend, Major Henry Lee of the Virginia dragoons. This active and daring officer had frequently been employed by him in scouring the country on the west side of the Hudson to collect information; keep an eye upon the enemy's posts; cut off their supplies, and check their foraging parties. The *coup de main* at Stony Point had piqued his emulation. In his communications to head-quarters he intimated that an opportunity presented for an exploit of almost equal daring. In the course of his reconnoitring, and by means of spies, he had discovered that the British post at Paulus Hook, immediately opposite to New York, was very negligently guarded. Paulus Hook is a long, low point of the Jersey shore, stretching into the Hudson, and connected to the mainland by a sandy isthmus. A fort had been erected on it, and garrisoned with four or five hundred men, under the command of Major Sutherland. It was a strong position. A creek fordable only in two places rendered the Hook difficult of access. Within this, a deep trench had been cut across the isthmus, traversed by a drawbridge with a barred gate; and still within this was a double row of abatis, extending into the water. The whole position, with the country immediately adjacent, was separated from the rest of Jersey by the Hackensack River, running parallel to the Hudson, at the distance of a very few miles, and only traversable in boats, excepting at the New Bridge, about fourteen miles from Paulus Hook.

Confident in the strength of his position, and its distance from any American force, Major Sutherland had become remiss in his military precautions; the want of vigilance in a commander soon produces carelessness in subalterns, and a general negligence prevailed in the garrison.

All this had been ascertained by Major Lee; and he now proposed the daring project of surprising the fort at night, and thus striking an insulting blow "within cannon shot of New York." Washington was pleased with the project; he had a relish for signal enterprises of the kind; he was aware of their striking and salutary effect upon both friend and foe; and he was disposed to favor the adventurous schemes of this young officer. The chief danger in the present one, would be in the evacuation and retreat after the blow had been effected, owing to the proximity of the enemy's force at New York. In consenting to the enterprise, therefore, he stipulated that Lee should not undertake it unless sure, from previous observation, that the post could be carried by instant surprise; when carried, no time was to be lost in attempting to bring off cannon or any other articles; or in collecting stragglers of the garrison who might skulk and hide themselves. He was "to surprise the post; bring off the garrison immediately, and effect a retreat."

On the 18th of August, Lee set out on the expedition, at the head of three hundred men of Lord Stirling's division, and a troop of dismounted dragoons under Captain McLane. The attack was to be made that night. Lest the enemy should hear of their movement, it was given out that they were on a mere foraging excursion. The road they took lay along that belt of rocky and wooded heights which borders the Hudson, and forms a rugged neck between it and the Hackensack. Lord Stirling followed with five hundred men, and encamped at the New Bridge on that river, to be at hand to render aid if required. As it would be perilous to return along the rugged neck just mentioned, from the number of the enemy encamped along the Hudson, Lee, after striking the blow, was to push for Dow's Ferry on the Hackensack, not far from Paulus Hook, where boats would be waiting to receive him.

It was between two and three in the morning when Lee arrived at the creek which rendered Paulus Hook difficult of access. It happened, fortunately, that Major Sutherland, the British commander, had, the day before, detached a foraging party under a Major Buskirk, to a part of the country called the English Neighborhood. As Lee and his men approached, they were mistaken by the sentinel for this party on its return. The darkness of the night favored the mistake. They passed the creek and ditch, entered the works unmolested, and had made themselves masters of the post before the negligent garrison were well roused from sleep. Major Sutherland and

about sixty Hessians threw themselves into a small block-house on the left of the fort and opened an irregular fire. To attempt to dislodge them would have cost too much time. Alarm guns from the ships in the river and the forts at New York threatened speedy re-enforcements to the enemy. Having made one hundred and fifty-nine prisoners, among whom were three officers, Lee commenced his retreat, without tarrying to destroy either barracks or artillery. He had achieved his object: a *coup de main* of signal audacity. Few of the enemy were slain, for there was but little fighting, and no massacre. His own loss was two men killed and three wounded.

His retreat was attended by perils and perplexities. Through blunder or misapprehension, the boats which he was to have found at Dow's Ferry on the Hackensack, disappointed him; and he had to make his way with his weary troops up the neck of land between that river and the Hudson, in imminent danger of being cut up by Buskirk and his scouting detachment. Fortunately Lord Stirling heard of his peril, and sent out a force to cover his retreat, which was effected in safety. Washington felt the value of this hardy and brilliant exploit. "The increase of confidence," said he, "which the army will derive from this affair and that of Stony Point, though great, will be among the least of the advantages resulting from these events." In a letter to the President of Congress, he extolled the prudence, address, enterprise, and bravery displayed on the occasion by Major Lee; in consequence of which the latter received the signal reward of a gold medal.

Washington was now at West Point, diligently providing for the defence of the Highlands against any further attempts of the enemy. During the time that he made this his headquarters, the most important works, we are told, were completed, especially the fort at West Point, which formed the citadel of those mountains.

Of his singularly isolated situation with respect to public affairs, we have evidence in the following passage of a letter to Edmund Randolph, who had recently taken his seat in Congress. "I shall be happy in such communications as your leisure and other considerations will permit you to transmit to me, for I am as totally unacquainted with the political state of things, and what is going forward in the great national council as if I was an alien; when a competent knowledge of the temper and designs of our allies, from time to time, and the frequent changes and complexion of affairs in Europe might, as they ought to do, have a considerable influence on the oper-

ations of our army, and would in many cases determine the propriety of measures, which under a cloud of darkness can only be groped at. I say this upon a presumption that Congress, either through their own ministers or that of France, must be acquainted in some degree with the plans of Great Britain, and the designs of France and Spain. If I mistake in this conjecture, it is to be lamented that they have not better information; or, if political motives render disclosures of this kind improper, I am content to remain in ignorance."

Of the style of living at head-quarters, we have a picture in the following letter to Doctor John Cochran, the surgeon-general and physician of the army. It is almost the only instance of sportive writing in all Washington's correspondence.

"DEAR DOCTOR:—I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprise them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is needless to premise that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered is more essential; and this shall be the purport of my letter.

"Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table: a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beefsteak pies, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing the space and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which, without them, would be about twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies, and it is a question, if in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples instead of having both of beefsteaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them."

We may add, that, however poor the fare and poor the table equipage at head-quarters, every thing was conducted with strict etiquette and decorum, and we make no doubt the ladies in question were handed in with as much courtesy to the bacon and greens and tin dishes, as though they were to be regaled

with the daintiest viands, served up on enamelled plate and porcelain.

The arrival of Admiral Arbuthnot, with a fleet, bringing three thousand troops and a supply of provisions and stores, strengthened the hands of Sir Henry Clinton. Still he had not sufficient force to warrant any further attempt up the Hudson; Washington, by his diligence in fortifying West Point, having rendered that fastness of the Highlands apparently impregnable. Sir Henry turned his thoughts, therefore, towards the South, hoping, by a successful expedition in that direction, to counter-balance ill success in other quarters. As this would require large detachments, he threw up additional works on New York Island and at Brooklyn, to render his position secure with the diminished force that would remain with him.

At this juncture news was received of the arrival of the Count D'Estaing, with a formidable fleet on the coast of Georgia, having made a successful cruise in the West Indies, in the course of which he had taken St. Vincent's and Granada. A combined attack upon New York was again talked of. In anticipation of it, Washington called upon several of the Middle States for supplies of all kinds, and re-enforcements of militia. Sir Henry Clinton, also, changed his plans; caused Rhode Island to be evacuated; the troops and stores to be brought away; the garrisons brought off from Stony and Verplanck's Points, and all his forces to be concentrated at New York, which he endeavored to put in the strongest posture of defence.

Intelligence recently received, too, that Spain had joined France in hostilities against England, contributed to increase the solicitude and perplexities of the enemy, while it gave fresh confidence to the Americans.

The Chevalier de la Luzerne, minister from France, with Mons. Barbé Marbois, his secretary of legation, having recently landed at Boston, paid Washington a visit at his mountain fortress, bringing letters of introduction from Lafayette. The chevalier not having yet announced himself to Congress, did not choose to be received in his public character. "If he had," writes Washington, "except paying him military honors, it was not my intention to depart from that plain and simple manner of living, which accords with the real interest and policy of men struggling under every difficulty for the attainment of the most inestimable blessing of life, *liberty*."

In conformity with this intention, he welcomed the chevalier to the mountains with the thunder of artillery, and received

him at his fortress with military ceremonial; but very probably surprised him with the stern simplicity of his table, while he charmed him with the dignity and grace with which he presided at it. The ambassador evidently acquitted himself with true French suavity and diplomatic tact. "He was polite enough," writes Washington, "to approve my principle, and condescended to appear pleased with our Spartan living. In a word, he made us all exceedingly happy by his affability and good humor while he remained in camp."

The letters from Lafayette spoke of his favorable reception at court, and his appointment to an honorable situation in the French army. "I had no doubt," writes Washington, "that this would be the case. To hear it from yourself adds pleasure to the account. And here, my dear friend, let me congratulate you. None can do it with more warmth of affection, or sincere joy than myself. Your forward zeal in the cause of liberty; your singular attachment to this infant world; your ardent and persevering efforts, not only in America, but since your return to France, to serve the United States; your polite attention to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for *me*, have ripened the first impressions of esteem and attachment which I imbibed for you, into such perfect love and gratitude, as neither time nor absence can impair. This will warrant my assuring you that, whether in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant Frenchmen, if circumstances should require this, whether as a major-general commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our swords and spears have given place to the ploughshare and the pruning-hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you with all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and, in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception, shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living. This, from past experience, I know you can submit to; and if the lovely partner of your happiness will consent to participate with *us* in such rural entertainment and amusements, I can undertake, on behalf of Mrs. Washington, that she will do every thing in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the marchioness. My inclination and endeavors to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you, that I love everybody that is dear to you, and consequently participate in the pleasure you feel in the prospect of again becoming a parent, and do most sincerely congratulate you and your lady on this fresh pledge she is about to give you of her love."

Washington's anticipations of a combined operation with

D'Estaing against New York were again disappointed. The French admiral, on arriving on the coast of Georgia, had been persuaded to co-operate with the Southern army, under General Lincoln, in an attempt to recover Savannah, which had fallen into the hands of the British during the preceding year. For three weeks a siege was carried on with great vigor by regular approaches on land, and cannonade and bombardment from the shipping. On the 9th of October, although the approaches were not complete, and no sufficient breach had been effected, Lincoln and D'Estaing, at the head of their choicest troops, advanced before daybreak to storm the works. The assault was gallant but unsuccessful; both Americans and French had planted their standards on the redoubts, but were finally repulsed. After the repulse, both armies retired from before the place, the French having lost in killed and wounded upwards of six hundred men, the Americans about four hundred. D'Estaing himself was among the wounded, and the gallant Count Pulaski among the slain. The loss of the enemy was trifling, being protected by their works.

The Americans recrossed the Savannah River into South Carolina; the militia returned to their homes, and the French re-embarked.

The tidings of this reverse, which reached Washington late in November, put an end to all prospect of co-operation from the French fleet; a consequent change took place in all his plans. The militia of New York and Massachusetts, recently assembled, were disbanded, and arrangements were made for the winter. The army was thrown into two divisions; one was to be stationed under General Heath in the Highlands, for the protection of West Point and the neighboring posts; the other and principal division was to be huddled near Morristown, where Washington was to have his head-quarters. The cavalry were to be sent to Connecticut.

Understanding that Sir Henry Clinton was making preparations at New York for a large embarkation of troops, and fearing they might be destined against Georgia and Carolina, he resolved to detach the greater part of his Southern troops for the protection of those States; a provident resolution, in which he was confirmed by subsequent instructions from Congress. Accordingly, the North Carolina brigade took up its march for Charleston in November, and the whole of the Virginia line in December.

Notwithstanding the recent preparations at New York, the ships remained in port, and the enemy held themselves in col-

lected force there. Doubts began to be entertained of some furtive design nearer at hand, and measures were taken to protect the army against an attack when in winter quarters. Sir Henry, however, was regulating his movements by those the French fleet might make after the repulse at Savannah. Intelligence at length arrived that it had been dispersed by a violent storm. Count D'Estaing, with a part, had shaped his course for France; the rest had proceeded to the West Indies.

Sir Henry now lost no time in carrying his plans into operation. Leaving the garrison of New York under the command of Lieutenant-General Knyphausen, he embarked several thousand men, on board of transports, to be convoyed by five ships of the line and several frigates under Admiral Arbuthnot, and set sail on the 26th of December, accompanied by Lord Cornwallis, on an expedition intended for the capture of Charleston and the reduction of South Carolina.

## CHAPTER XXI.

SUFFERINGS OF THE ARMY AT MORRISTOWN — RIGOROUS WINTER — DERANGEMENT OF THE CURRENCY — CONFUSION IN THE COMMISSARIAT — IMPRESSMENT OF SUPPLIES — PATRIOTIC CONDUCT OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW JERSEY — THE BAY OF NEW YORK FROZEN OVER — LORD STIRLING'S EXPEDITION AGAINST STATEN ISLAND — KNYPHAUSEN'S INCURSION INTO THE JERSEYS — CALDWELL'S CHURCH AT ELIZABETHTOWN BURNT — CHARACTER OF ITS PASTOR — FORAY INTO WESTCHESTER COUNTY — BURNING OF YOUNG'S HOUSE IN THE VALLEY OF THE NEPERAN.

THE dreary encampment at Valley Forge has become proverbial for its hardships; yet they were scarcely more severe than those suffered by Washington's army during the present winter, while huddled among the heights of Morristown. The winter set in early, and was uncommonly rigorous. The transportation of supplies was obstructed; the magazines were exhausted, and the commissaries had neither money nor credit to enable them to replenish them. For weeks at a time the army was on half allowance; sometimes without meat, sometimes without bread, sometimes without both. There was a scarcity, too, of clothing and blankets, so that the poor soldiers were starving with cold as well as hunger.

Washington wrote to President Reed of Pennsylvania, en-



treating aid and supplies from that State to keep his army from disbanding. "We have never," said he, "experienced a like extremity at any period of the war."<sup>1</sup>

The year 1780 opened upon a famishing camp. "For a fortnight past," writes Washington, on the 8th of January, "the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing with want. Yet," adds he, feelingly, "they have borne their sufferings with a patience that merits the approbation, and ought to excite the sympathies, of their countrymen."

The severest trials of the Revolution, in fact, were not in the field, where there were shouts to excite and laurels to be won; but in the squalid wretchedness of ill-provided camps, where there was nothing to cheer and every thing to be endured. To suffer was the lot of the revolutionary soldier.

A rigorous winter had much to do with the actual distresses of the army, but the root of the evil lay in the derangement of the currency. Congress had commenced the war without adequate funds, and without the power of imposing direct taxes. To meet pressing emergencies, it had emitted paper money, which, for a time, passed currently at par; but sank in value as further emissions succeeded, and that already in circulation remained unredeemed. The several States added to the evil by emitting paper in their separate capacities: thus the country gradually became flooded with a "continental currency," as it was called; irredeemable, and of no intrinsic value. The consequence was a general derangement of trade and finance. The continental currency declined to such a degree, that forty dollars in paper were equivalent to only one in specie.

Congress attempted to put a stop to this depreciation, by making paper money a legal tender, at its nominal value, in the discharge of debts, however contracted. This opened the door to knavery, and added a new feature to the evil.

The commissaries now found it difficult to purchase supplies for the immediate wants of the army, and impossible to provide any stores in advance. They were left destitute of funds, and the public credit was prostrated by the accumulating debts suffered to remain uncanceled. The changes which had taken place in the commissary department added to this confusion. The commissary-general, instead of receiving, as heretofore, a commission on expenditures, was to have a fixed salary in paper currency; and his deputies were to be compensated in like manner, without the usual allowance of rations and forage. No competent agents could be procured on such terms; and the derangement produced

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<sup>1</sup> Life of Reed, ii. 189.

throughout the department compelled Colonel Wadsworth, the able and upright commissary-general, to resign.

In the present emergency Washington was reluctantly compelled, by the distresses of the army, to call upon the counties of the State for supplies of grain and cattle, proportioned to their respective abilities. These supplies were to be brought into the camp within a certain time; the grain to be measured and the cattle estimated by any two of the magistrates of the county in conjunction with the commissary, and certificates to be given by the latter, specifying the quantity of each and the terms of payment.

Wherever a compliance with this call was refused, the articles required were to be impressed: it was a painful alternative, yet nothing else could save the army from dissolution or starving. Washington charged his officers to act with as much tenderness as possible, graduating the exaction according to the stock of each individual, so that no family should be deprived of what was necessary to its subsistence. "While your measures are adapted to the emergency," writes he to Colonel Matthias Ogden, "and you consult what you owe to the service, I am persuaded you will not forget that, as we are compelled by necessity to take the property of citizens for the support of an army on which their safety depends, we should be careful to manifest that we have a reverence for their rights, and wish not to do any thing which that necessity, and even their own good, do not absolutely require."

To the honor of the magistrates and the people of Jersey, Washington testifies that his requisitions were punctually complied with, and in many counties exceeded. Too much praise, indeed, cannot be given to the people of this State for the patience with which most of them bore these exactions, and the patriotism with which many of them administered to the wants of their countrymen in arms. Exhausted as the State was by repeated drainings, yet, at one time, when deep snows cut off all distant supplies, Washington's army was wholly subsisted by it. "Provisions came in with hearty good-will from the farmers in Mendham, Chatham, Hanover, and other rural places, together with stockings, shoes, coats, and blankets; while the women met together to knit and sew for the soldiery."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From manuscript notes by the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle. This worthy clergyman gives many anecdotes illustrative of the active patriotism of the Jersey women. Anna Kitchel, wife of a farmer of Whippany, is repeatedly his theme of well-merited eulogium. Her potato bin, meal bag and granary, writes he, had always some comfort for the patriot soldiers. When unable to billet them in her house, a huge kettle filled with meat and vegetables was hung over the fire, that they might not go away hungry.

As the winter advanced, the cold increased in severity. It was the most intense ever remembered in the country. The great bay of New York was frozen over. No supplies could come to the city by water. Provisions grew scanty; and there was such lack of firewood, that old transports were broken up, and uninhabited wooden houses pulled down for fuel. The safety of the city was endangered. The ships-of-war, immovably icebound in its harbor, no longer gave it protection. The insular security of the place was at an end. An army with its heaviest artillery and baggage might cross the Hudson on the ice. The veteran Knyphausen began to apprehend an invasion, and took measures accordingly; the seamen of the ships and transports were landed and formed into companies, and the inhabitants of the city were embodied, officered, and subjected to garrison duty.

Washington was aware of the opportunity which offered itself for a signal *coup de main*, but was not in a condition to profit by it. His troops, butted among the heights of Morristown, were half fed, half clothed, and inferior in number to the garrison of New York. He was destitute of funds necessary to fit them for the enterprise, and the quartermaster could not furnish means of transportation.

Still, in the frozen condition of the bay and rivers, some minor blow might be attempted, sufficient to rouse and cheer the spirits of the people. With this view, having ascertained that the ice formed a bridge across the strait between the Jersey shore and Staten Island, he projected a descent upon the latter by Lord Stirling with twenty-five hundred men, to surprise and capture a British force of ten or twelve hundred.

His lordship crossed on the night of the 14th of January, from De Hart's Point to the island. His approach was discovered; the troops took refuge in the works, which were too strongly situated to be attacked; a channel remaining open through the ice across the bay, a boat was despatched to New York for re-enforcements.

The projected surprise having thus proved a complete failure, and his own situation becoming hazardous, Lord Stirling recrossed to the Jersey shore with a number of prisoners whom he had captured. He was pursued by a party of cavalry, which he repulsed, and effected a retreat to Elizabethtown. Some few stragglers fell into the hands of the enemy, and many of his men were severely frostbitten.

By way of retort, Knyphausen, on the 25th of January, sent out two detachments to harass the American outposts. One

crossed to Paulus Hook, and being joined by part of the garrison of that post, pushed on to Newark, surprised and captured a company stationed there, set fire to the academy, and returned without loss.

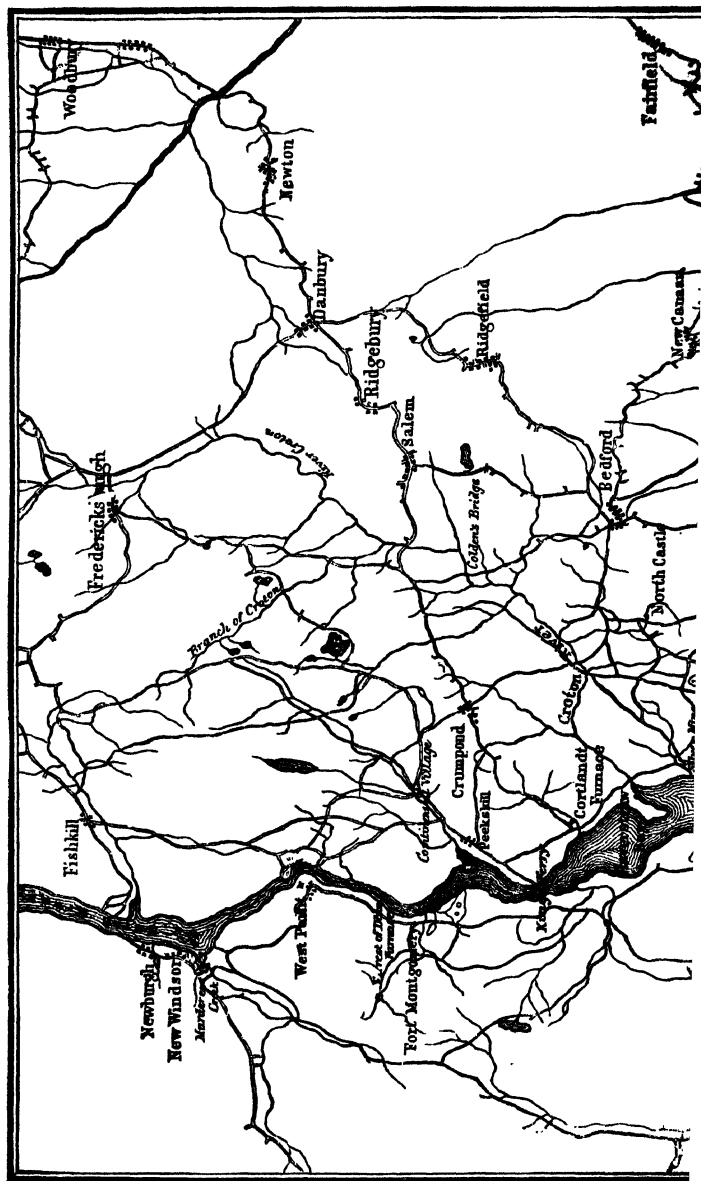
The other detachment, consisting of one hundred dragoons and between three and four hundred infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Boskirk, crossed from Staten Island to Trembly's Point, surprised the picket-guard at Elizabethtown, and captured two majors, two captains, and forty-two privates. This, likewise, was effected without loss. The disgraceful part of the expedition was the burning of the town house, a church, and a private residence, and the plundering of the inhabitants.

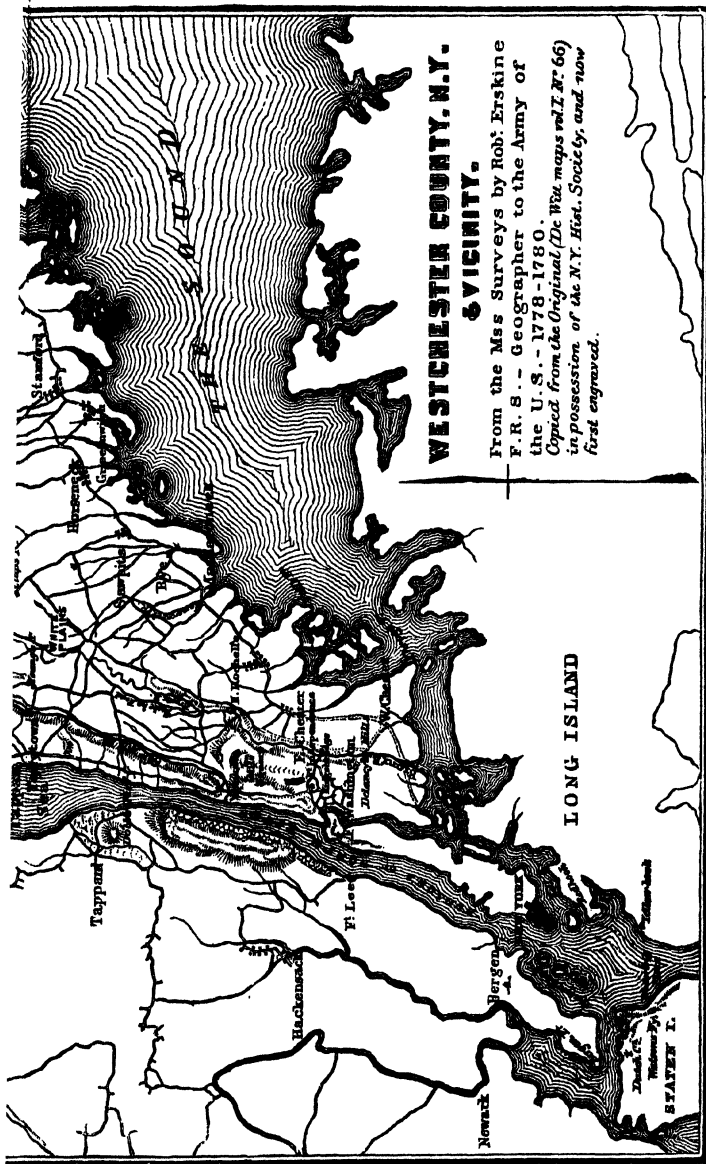
The church destroyed was a Presbyterian place of worship, and its pastor, the Rev. James Caldwell, had rendered himself an especial object of hostility to both Briton and tory. He was a zealous patriot; had served as chaplain to those portions of the American army that successively occupied the Jerseys; and now officiated in that capacity in Colonel Elias Dayton's regiment, beside occasionally acting as commissary. His church had at times served as hospital to the American soldier; or shelter to the hastily assembled militia. Its bell was the tocsin of alarm; from its pulpit he had many a time stirred up the patriotism of his countrymen by his ardent, eloquent, and pathetic appeals, laying beside him his pistols before he commenced. His popularity in the army, and among the Jersey people, was unbounded. He was termed by his friends a "rousing gospel preacher," and by the enemy a "frantic priest" and a "rebel fire-brand." On the present occasion, his church was set on fire by a virulent tory of the neighborhood, who, as he saw it wrapped in flames, "regretted that the black-coated rebel, Caldwell, was not in his pulpit." We shall have occasion to speak of the fortunes of this pastor and his family hereafter.

Another noted maraud during Knyphausen's military sway, was in the lower part of Westchester County, in a hilly region lying between the British and American lines, which had been the scene of part of the past year's campaign. Being often foraged, its inhabitants had become belligerent in their habits, and quick to retaliate on all marauders.

In this region, about twenty miles from the British outposts, and not far from White Plains, the Americans had established a post of three hundred men at a stone building commonly known as Young's house, from the name of its owner. It commanded a road which passed from north to south down







## WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y. & VICINITY.

From the Mss Surveys by Robt Erskine  
F.R.S. - Geographer to the Army of  
the U.S. - 1778-1780.  
*Copied from the Original (De Wit maps vol.I p. 66)*  
in possession of the N.Y. Hist. Society, and now  
first engraved.





along the narrow but fertile valley of the Sawmill River, now known by its original Indian name of the Neperan. On this road the garrison of Young's house kept a vigilant eye, to intercept the convoys of cattle and provisions which had been collected or plundered by the enemy, and which passed down this valley towards New York. This post had long been an annoyance to the enemy, but its distance from the British lines had hitherto saved it from attack. The country now was covered with snow; troops could be rapidly transported on sleighs; and it was determined that Young's house should be surprised, and this rebel nest broken up.

On the evening of the 2d of February, an expedition set out for the purpose from King's Bridge, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Norton, and consisting of four flank companies of guards, two companies of Hessians, and a party of Yagers, all in sleighs; besides a body of Yager cavalry, and a number of mounted Westchester refugees, with two three-pounders.

The snow, being newly fallen, was deep; the sleighs broke their way through it with difficulty. The troops at length abandoned them and pushed forward on foot. The cannon were left behind for the same reason. It was a weary tramp; the snow in many places was more than two feet deep, and they had to take by-ways and cross-roads to avoid the American patrols.

The sun rose while they were yet seven miles from Young's house. To surprise the post was out of the question; still they kept on. Before they could reach the house the country had taken the alarm, and the Westchester yeomanry had armed themselves, and were hastening to aid the garrison.

The British light infantry and grenadiers invested the mansion; the cavalry posted themselves on a neighboring eminence, to prevent retreat or re-enforcement, and the house was assailed. It made a brave resistance, and was aided by some of the yeomanry stationed in an adjacent orchard. The garrison, however, was overpowered; numbers were killed, and ninety taken prisoners. The house was sacked and set in flames; and thus, having broken up this stronghold of the country, the party hastened to effect a safe return to the lines with their prisoners, some of whom were so badly wounded that they had to be left at different farm-houses on the road. The detachment reached King's Bridge by nine o'clock the same evening, and boasted that, in this enterprise, they had sustained no other loss than two killed and twenty-three wounded.

Of the prisoners many were doubtless farmers and farmers' sons, who had turned out in defence of their homes, and were now to be transferred to the horrors of the jail and sugar-house in New York. We give this affair as a specimen of the *petite guerre* carried on in the southern part of Westchester County; the NEUTRAL GROUND, as it was called, but subjected from its vicinity to the city, to be foraged by the royal forces, and plundered and insulted by refugees and tories. No part of the Union was more harried and trampled down by friend and foe, during the Revolution, than this debatable region and the Jerseys.

## CHAPTER XXII.

ARNOLD IN COMMAND OF PHILADELPHIA — UNPOPULAR MEASURES — ARNOLD'S STYLE OF LIVING — HIS SCHEMES AND SPECULATIONS — HIS COLLISIONS WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL — HIS LAND PROJECT — CHARGES SENT AGAINST HIM TO CONGRESS — HIS ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC — CHARGES REFERRED TO COURT-MARTIAL — HIS MARRIAGE — VERDICT OF THE COURT-MARTIAL — ARNOLD REPRIMANDED — OBTAINS LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE ARMY.

THE most irksome duty that Washington had to perform during the winter's encampment at Morristown, regarded General Arnold and his military government of Philadelphia in 1778. To explain it requires a glance back to that period.

At the time of entering upon this command, Arnold's accounts with government were yet unsettled; the committee appointed by Congress, at his own request, to examine them, having considered some of his charges dubious, and others exorbitant. Washington, however, still looked upon him with favor, and, but a month previously, had presented him with a pair of epaulettes and a sword-knot, "as a testimony of his sincere regard and approbation."

The command of Philadelphia, at this time, was a delicate and difficult one, and required to be exercised with extreme circumspection. The boundaries between the powers vested in the military commander, and those inherent in the State government, were ill defined. Disaffection to the American cause prevailed both among the permanent and casual residents, and required to be held in check with firmness but toleration. By a resolve of Congress, no goods, wares, or merchandise were to

be removed, transferred, or sold, until the ownership of them could be ascertained by a joint committee of Congress and of the Council of Pennsylvania; any public stores belonging to the enemy were to be seized and converted to the use of the army.

Washington in his letter of instructions, left it to Arnold's discretion to adopt such measures as should appear to him most effectual and least offensive in executing this resolve of Congress; in which he was to be aided by an assistant quartermaster-general, subject to his directions. "You will take every prudent step in your power," writes Washington, "to preserve tranquillity and order in the city, and give security to individuals of every class and description, restraining, as far as possible, till the restoration of civil government, every species of persecution, insult or abuse, either from the soldiery to the inhabitants, or among each other."

One of Arnold's first measures was to issue a proclamation enforcing the resolve of Congress. In so doing, he was countenanced by leading personages of Philadelphia, and the proclamation was drafted by General Joseph Reed. The measure excited great dissatisfaction, and circumstances attending the enforcement of it gave rise to scandal. Former instances of a mercenary spirit made Arnold liable to suspicions, and it was alleged that, while by the proclamation he shut up the stores and shops so that even the officers of the army could not procure necessary articles of merchandise, he was privately making large purchases for his own enrichment.

His style of living gave point to this scandal. He occupied one of the finest houses in the city; set up a splendid establishment; had his carriage and four horses and a train of domestics; gave expensive entertainments, and indulged in a luxury and parade, which were condemned as little befitting a republican general; especially one whose accounts with government were yet unsettled, and who had imputations of mercenary rapacity still hanging over him.

Ostentatious prodigality, in fact, was Arnold's besetting sin. To cope with his overwhelming expenses, he engaged in various speculations, more befitting the trafficking habits of his early life than his present elevated position. Nay, he availed himself of that position to aid his speculations, and sometimes made temporary use of public moneys passing through his hands. In his impatience to be rich, he at one time thought of taking command of a privateer, and making lucrative captures at sea.

In the exercise of his military functions, he had become involved in disputes with the president (Wharton) and executive council of Pennsylvania, and by his conduct, which was deemed arbitrary and arrogant, had drawn upon himself the hostility of that body, which became stern and unsparing censors of his conduct.

He had not been many weeks in Philadelphia before he became attached to one of its reigning belles, Miss Margaret Shippen, daughter of Mr. Edward Shippen, in after years chief justice of Pennsylvania. Her family were not considered well affected to the American cause; the young lady herself, during the occupation of the city by the enemy, had been a "toast" among the British officers, and selected as one of the beauties of the *Mischianza*.

Arnold paid his addresses in an open and honorable style, first obtaining by letter the sanction of the father. Party feeling at that time ran high in Philadelphia on local subjects connected with the change of the State government. Arnold's connection with the Shippen family increased his disfavor with the president and executive council, who were whigs to a man; and it was sneeringly observed, that "he had courted the loyalists from the start."

General Joseph Reed, at that time one of the executive committee, observes in a letter to General Greene, "Will you not think it extraordinary that General Arnold made a public entertainment the night before last, of which, not only common tory ladies, but the wives and daughters of persons proscribed by the State, and now with the enemy at New York, formed a very considerable number? The fact is literally true."

Regarded from a different point of view, this conduct might have been attributed to the courtesy of a gallant soldier; who scorned to carry the animosity of the field into the drawing-room; or to proscribe and persecute the wives and daughters of political exiles.

In the beginning of December, General Reed became president of the executive council of Pennsylvania, and under his administration the ripening hostility to Arnold was brought to a crisis. Among the various schemes of the latter for bettering his fortunes, and securing the means of living when the war should come to an end, was one for forming a settlement in the western part of the State of New York, to be composed, principally, of the officers and soldiers who had served under him. His scheme was approved by Mr. John

Jay, the pure-minded patriot of New York, at that time President of Congress, and was sanctioned by the New York delegation. Provided with letters from them, Arnold left Philadelphia about the 1st of January (1779), and set out for Albany to obtain a grant of land for the purpose, from the New York Legislature.

Within a day or two after his departure, his public conduct was discussed in the executive council of Pennsylvania, and it was resolved unanimously, that the course of his military command in the city had been in many respects oppressive, unworthy of his rank and station, and highly discouraging to the liberties and interests of America, and disrespectful to the supreme executive authority of the State.

As he was an officer of the United States, the complaints and grievances of Pennsylvania were set forth by the executive council in eight charges, and forwarded to Congress, accompanied by documents, and a letter from President Reed.

Information of these facts, with a printed copy of the charges, reached Arnold at Washington's camp on the Raritan, which he had visited while on the way to Albany. His first solicitude was about the effect they might have upon Miss Shippen, to whom he was now engaged. In a letter dated February 8, he entreated her not to suffer these rude attacks on him to give her a moment's uneasiness — they could do him no injury.

On the following day he issued an address to the public, recalling his faithful services of nearly four years, and inveighing against the proceedings of the president and council; who, not content with injuring him in a cruel and unprecedented manner with Congress, had ordered copies of their charges to be printed and dispersed throughout the several States, for the purpose of prejudicing the public mind against him, while the matter was yet in suspense. "Their conduct," writes he, "appears the more cruel and malicious, in making the charges after I had left the city; as my intention of leaving the city was known for five weeks before." This complaint, we must observe, was rebutted, on their part, by the assertion that, at the time of his departure, he knew of the accusation that was impending.

In conclusion, Arnold informed the public that he had requested Congress to direct a court-martial to inquire into his conduct, and trusted his countrymen would suspend their judgment in the matter, until he should have an opportunity of being heard.

Public opinion was divided. His brilliant services spoke eloquently in his favor. His admirers repined that a fame won by such daring exploits on the field should be stifled down by cold calumnies in Philadelphia; and many thought, dispassionately, that the State authorities had acted with excessive harshness towards a meritorious officer, in widely spreading their charges against him, and thus, in an unprecedented way, putting a public brand upon him.

On the 16th of February, Arnold's appeal to Congress was referred to the committee which had under consideration the letter of President Reed and its accompanying documents, and it was charged to make a report with all convenient despatch. A motion was made to suspend Arnold from all command during the inquiry. To the credit of Congress it was negatived.

Much contrariety of feeling prevailed on the subject in the committee of Congress and the executive council of Pennsylvania, and the correspondence between those legislative bodies was occasionally tinged with needless acrimony.

Arnold, in the course of January, had obtained permission from Washington to resign the command of Philadelphia, but deferred to act upon it, until the charges against him should be examined, lest, as he said, his enemies should misinterpret his motives, and ascribe his resignation to fear of a disgraceful suspension in consequence of those charges.

About the middle of March, the committee brought in a report exculpating him from all criminality in the matters charged against him. As soon as the report was brought in, he considered his name vindicated, and resigned.

Whatever exultation he may have felt was short-lived. Congress did not call up and act upon the report, as, in justice to him, they should have done, whether to sanction it or not; but referred the subject anew to a joint committee of their body and the assembly and council of Pennsylvania. Arnold was, at this time, on the eve of marriage with Miss Shippen, and, thus circumstanced, it must have been peculiarly galling to his pride to be kept under the odium of imputed delinquencies.

The report of the joint committee brought up animated discussions in Congress. Several resolutions recommended by the committee were merely of a formal nature, and intended to soothe the wounded sensibilities of Pennsylvania; these were passed without dissent; but it was contended that certain charges advanced by the executive council of that State were only cognizable by a court-martial, and, after a warm debate,

it was resolved (April 3), by a large majority, that the commander-in-chief should appoint such a court for the consideration of them.

Arnold inveighed bitterly against the injustice of subjecting him to a trial before a military tribunal for alleged offences of which he had been acquitted by the committee of Congress. He was sacrificed, he said, to avoid a breach with Pennsylvania. In a letter to Washington, he charged it all to the hostility of President Reed, who, he affirmed, had by his address, kept the affair in suspense for two months, and at last obtained the resolution of Congress directing the court-martial. He urged Washington to appoint a speedy day for the trial, that he might not linger under the odium of an unjust public accusation. "I have no doubt of obtaining justice from a court-martial," writes he, "as every officer in the army must feel himself injured by the cruel and unprecedented treatment I have met with. . . . When your Excellency considers my sufferings, and the cruel situation I am in, your own humanity and feeling as a soldier will render every thing I can say further on the subject unnecessary."

It was doubtless soothing to his irritated pride, that the woman on whom he had placed his affections remained true to him; for his marriage with Miss Shippen took place just five days after the mortifying vote of Congress.

Washington sympathized with Arnold's impatience, and appointed the 1st of May for the trial, but it was repeatedly postponed; first, at the request of the Pennsylvania council, to allow time for the arrival of witnesses from the South; afterwards, in consequence of threatening movements of the enemy, which obliged every officer to be at his post. Arnold, in the mean time, continued to reside at Philadelphia, holding his commission in the army, but filling no public office; getting deeper and deeper in debt, and becoming more and more unpopular.

Having once been attacked in the street in the course of some popular tumult, he affected to consider his life in danger, and applied to Congress for a guard of Continental soldiers, "as no protection was to be expected from the authority of the State for an honest man."

He was told in reply, that his application ought to have been made to the executive authority of Pennsylvania; "in whose disposition to protect every honest citizen, Congress had full confidence, and *highly disapproved the insinuation of every individual to the contrary.*"

For months, Arnold remained in this anxious and irritated state. His situation, he said, was cruel. His character would

continue to suffer until he should be acquitted by a court-martial, and he would be effectually prevented from joining the army, which he wished to do as soon as his wounds would permit, that he might render the country every service in his power in this critical time. "For though I have been ungratefully treated," adds he, "I do not consider it as from my countrymen in general, but from a set of men, who, void of principle, are governed entirely by private interest."

At length, when the campaign was over, and the army had gone into winter quarters, the long-delayed court-martial was assembled at Morristown. Of the eight charges originally advanced against Arnold by the Pennsylvania council, four only came under cognizance of the court. Of two of these he was entirely acquitted. The remaining two were,

*First.* That while in the camp at Valley Forge, he, without the knowledge of the commander-in-chief, or the sanction of the State government, had granted a written permission for a vessel belonging to disaffected persons, to proceed from the port of Philadelphia, then in possession of the enemy, to any port of the United States.

*Second.* That, availing himself of his official authority, he had appropriated the public wagons of Pennsylvania, when called forth on a special emergency, to the transportation of private property, and that of persons who voluntarily remained with the enemy, and were deemed disaffected to the interests and independence of America.

In regard to the first of these charges, Arnold alleged that the person who applied for the protection of the vessel, had taken the oath of allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania required by the laws; that he was not residing in Philadelphia at the time, but had applied on behalf of himself and a company, and that the intentions of that person and his associates with regard to the vessel and cargo appeared to be upright.

As to his having granted the permission without the knowledge of the commander-in-chief, though present in the camp, Arnold alleged that it was customary in the army for general officers to grant passes and protections to inhabitants of the United States, friendly to the same, and that the protection was given in the present instance, to prevent the soldiery from plundering the vessel and cargo, coming from a place in possession of the enemy, until the proper authority could take cognizance of the matter.

In regard to the second charge, while it was proved that under his authority public wagons had been so used, it was



allowed in extenuation, that they had been employed at private expense, and without any design to defraud the public or impede the military service.

In regard to both charges, nothing fraudulent on the part of Arnold was proved, but the transactions involved in the first were pronounced irregular, and contrary to one of the articles of war; and in the second, imprudent and reprehensible, considering the high station occupied by the general at the time, and the court sentenced him to be reprimanded by the commander-in-chief. The sentence was confirmed by Congress on the 12th of February (1780).

We have forbore to go into all the particulars of this trial, but we have considered them attentively, discharging from our minds, as much as possible, all impressions produced by Arnold's subsequent history, and we are surprised to find, after the hostility manifested against him by the council of Pennsylvania, and their extraordinary measure to possess the public mind against him, how venial are the trespasses of which he stood convicted.

He may have given personal offence by his assuming vanity; by the arrogant exercise of his military authority; he may have displeased by his ostentation, and awakened distrust by his speculating; but as yet his patriotism was unquestioned. No turpitude had been proved against him; his brilliant exploits shed a splendor round his name, and he appeared before the public, a soldier crippled in their service. All these should have pleaded in his favor, should have produced indulgence of his errors, and mitigated that animosity which he always contended had been the cause of his ruin.

The reprimand adjudged by the court-martial was administered by Washington with consummate delicacy. The following were his words, as repeated by M. de Marbois, the French secretary of legation:

“Our profession is the chastest of all: even the shadow of a fault tarnishes the lustre of our finest achievements. The least inadvertence may rob us of the public favor, so hard to be acquired. I reprimend you for having forgotten, that, in proportion as you had rendered yourself formidable to our enemies, you should have been guarded and temperate in your deportment towards your fellow-citizens.

“Exhibit anew those noble qualities which have placed you on the list of our most valued commanders. I will myself furnish you, as far as it may be in my power, with opportunities of regaining the esteem of your country.”

A reprimand so mild and considerate, accompanied by such high eulogiums and generous promises, might have had a favorable effect upon Arnold, had he been in a different frame of mind; but he had persuaded himself that the court would incline in his favor and acquit him altogether; and he resented deeply a sentence, which he protested against as unmerited. His resentment was aggravated by delays in the settlement of his accounts, as he depended upon the sums he claimed as due to him, for the payment of debts by which he was harassed. In following the matter up, he became a weary, and probably irritable, applicant at the halls of Congress, and we are told gave great offence to members by his importunity, while he wore out the patience of his friends; but public bodies are prone to be offended by the importunity of baffled claimants, and the patience of friends is seldom proof against the reiterated story of a man's prolonged difficulties.

In the month of March, we find him intent on a new and adventurous project. He had proposed to the Board of Admiralty an expedition, requiring several ships-of-war and three or four hundred land troops, offering to take command of it should it be carried into effect, as his wounds still disabled him from duty on land. Washington, who knew his abilities in either service, was disposed to favor his proposition, but the scheme fell through from the impossibility of sparing the requisite number of men from the army. What Arnold's ultimate designs might have been in seeking such a command, are rendered problematical by his subsequent conduct. On the failure of the project, he requested and obtained from Washington leave of absence from the army for the summer, there being, he said, little prospect of an active campaign, and his wounds unfitting him for the field.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

SOUTH CAROLINA THREATENED — ITS CONDITION AND POPULATION — STORMY VOYAGE OF SIR HENRY CLINTON — LOSS OF HORSES — CHARACTER OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TARLETON — FLEET ARRIVES AT TYBEE — SIR HENRY CLINTON ADVANCES UPON CHARLESTON — LINCOLN PREPARES FOR DEFENCE — COMMODORE WHIPPLE — GOVERNOR RUTLEDGE — FOREBODINGS OF WASHINGTON — EMBARKATION OF BRITISH TROOPS AT NEW YORK — WASHINGTON SENDS DE KALB WITH RE-ENFORCEMENTS — HIS HOPEFUL LETTER TO STEUBEN.

THE return of spring brought little alleviation to the sufferings of the army at Morristown. All means of supplying its wants or recruiting its ranks were paralyzed by the continued depreciation of the currency. While Washington saw his forces gradually diminishing, his solicitude was intensely excited for the safety of the Southern States. The reader will recall the departure from New York, in the latter part of December, of the fleet of Admiral Arbuthnot with the army of Sir Henry Clinton, destined for the subjugation of South Carolina. "The richness of the country," says Colonel Tarleton, in his history of the campaign, "its vicinity to Georgia, and its distance from General Washington, pointed out the advantage and facility of its conquest. While it would be an unspeakable loss to the Americans, the possession of it would tend to secure to the crown the southern part of the continent which stretches beyond it." It was presumed that the subjugation of it would be an easy task. The population was scanty for the extent of the country, and was made up of emigrants, or the descendants of emigrants, from various lands and of various nations: Huguenots, who had emigrated from France after the revocation of the edict of Nantz; Germans from the Palatinate; Irish Protestants, who had received grants of land from the crown; Scotch Highlanders, transported hither after the disastrous battle of Culloden; Dutch colonists, who had left New York, after its submission to England, and been settled here on bounty lands.

Some of these foreign elements might be hostile to British domination, but others would be favorable. There was a large class, too, that had been born or had passed much of their lives in England, who retained for it a filial affection, spoke of it as *home*, and sent their children to be educated there.

The number of slaves within the province and of savages on its western frontier, together with its wide extent of unprotected sea-coast, were encouragements to an invasion by sea and land. Little combination of militia and yeomanry need be apprehended from a population sparsely scattered, and where the settlements were widely separated by swamps and forests. Washington was in no condition to render prompt and effectual relief, his army being at a vast distance, and considered as "in a great measure broken up." The British, on the contrary, had the advantage of their naval force, "there being nothing then in the American seas which could even venture to look at it."<sup>1</sup>

Such were some of the considerations which prompted the enemy to this expedition; and which gave Washington great anxiety concerning it.

General Lincoln was in command at Charleston, but uncertain as yet of the designs of the enemy, and at a loss what course to pursue. Diffident of himself, and accustomed to defer to the wisdom of Washington, he turns to him in his present perplexity. "It is among my misfortunes," writes he, modestly (January 23), "that I am not near enough to your Excellency to have the advantage of your advice and direction. I feel my own insufficiency and want of experience. I can promise you nothing but a disposition to serve my country. If this town should be attacked, as now threatened, I know my duty will call me to defend it, as long as opposition can be of any avail. I hope my inclination will coincide with my duty."

The voyage of Sir Henry Clinton proved long and tempestuous. The ships were dispersed. Several fell into the hands of the Americans. One ordnance vessel foundered. Most of the artillery horses, and all those of the cavalry perished. The scattered ships rejoined each other about the end of January, at Tybee Bay on Savannah River; where those that had sustained damage were repaired as speedily as possible. The loss of the cavalry horses was especially felt by Sir Henry. There was a corps of two hundred and fifty dragoons, on which he depended greatly in the kind of guerilla warfare he was likely to pursue, in a country of forests and morasses. Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton, who commanded them, was one of those dogs of war, which Sir Henry was prepared to let slip on emergencies, to scour and maraud the country. This "bold dragoon," so noted in Southern warfare, was about twenty-six years of age, of a swarthy complexion, with small, black,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ann. Register* 1780, p. 217.

piercing eyes. He is described as being rather below the middle size, square-built and strong, "with large muscular legs." It will be found that he was a first-rate partisan officer, prompt, ardent, active, but somewhat unscrupulous.

Landing from the fleet, perfectly dismounted, he repaired with his dragoons, in some of the quartermaster's boats, to Port Royal Island, on the seaboard of South Carolina, "to collect at that place, from friends or enemies, by money or by force, all the horses belonging to the islands in the neighborhood." He succeeded in procuring horses, though of an inferior quality to those he had lost, but consoled himself with the persuasion that he would secure better ones in the course of the campaign, by "exertion and enterprise," — a vague phrase, but very significant in the partisan vocabulary.

In the mean time, the transports having on board a great part of the army, sailed under convoy on the 10th of February, from Savannah to North Edisto Sound, where the troops disembarked on the 11th, on St. John's Island, about thirty miles below Charleston. Thence, Sir Henry Clinton set out for the banks of Ashley River opposite to the city, while a part of the fleet proceeded round by sea, for the purpose of blockading the harbor. The advance of Sir Henry was slow and cautious. Much time was consumed by him in fortifying intermediate ports, to keep up a secure communication with the fleet. He ordered from Savannah all the troops that could be spared, and wrote to Knyphausen, at New York, for re-enforcements from that place. Every precaution was taken by him to insure against a second repulse from before Charleston, which might prove fatal to his military reputation.

General Lincoln took advantage of this slowness on the part of his assailant, to extend and strengthen the works. Charleston stands at the end of an isthmus formed by the Ashley and Cooper Rivers. Beyond the main works on the land side he cut a canal, from one to the other of the swamps which border these rivers. In advance of the canal were two rows of abatis and a double picketed ditch. Within the canal, and between it and the main works, were strong redoubts and batteries, to open a flanking fire on any approaching column, while an enclosed horn-work of masonry formed a kind of citadel.

A squadron, commanded by Commodore Whipple, and composed of nine vessels of war of various sizes, the largest mounting forty-four guns, was to co-operate with forts Moultrie and Johnston, and the various batteries, in the defence of the harbor. They were to lie before the bar so as to command the

entrance of it. Great reliance also was placed on the bar itself, which it was thought no ship of the line could pass.

Governor Rutledge, a man eminent for talents, patriotism, firmness, and decision, was clothed with dictatorial powers during the present crisis; he had called out the militia of the State, and it was supposed they would duly obey the call. Large re-enforcements of troops also were expected from the North. Under all these circumstances, General Lincoln yielded to the entreaties of the inhabitants, and, instead of remaining with his army in the open country, as he had intended, shut himself up with them in the place for its defence, leaving merely his cavalry and two hundred light troops outside, who were to hover about the enemy and prevent small parties from marauding.

It was not until the 12th of March that Sir Henry Clinton effected his tardy approach, and took up a position on Charleston Neck, a few miles above the town. Admiral Arbuthnot soon showed an intention of introducing his ships into the harbor; barricading their waists, anchoring them in a situation where they might take advantage of the first favorable spring-tide, and fixing buoys on the bar for their guidance. Commodore Whipple had by this time ascertained by sounding, that a wrong idea had prevailed of the depth of water in the harbor, and that his ships could not anchor nearer than within three miles of the bar, so that it would be impossible for him to defend the passage of it. He quitted his station within it, therefore, after having destroyed a part of the enemy's buoys, and took a position where his ships might be abreast, and form a cross-fire with the batteries of Fort Moultrie, where Colonel Pinckney commanded.

Washington was informed of these facts, by letters from his former aide-de-camp, Colonel Laurens, who was in Charleston at the time. The information caused anxious forebodings. "The impracticability of defending the bar, I fear, amounts to the loss of the town and garrison," writes he in reply. "It really appears to me, that the propriety of attempting to defend the town, depended on the probability of defending the bar, and that when this ceased, the attempt ought to have been relinquished." The same opinion was expressed by him in a letter to Baron Steuben; "but at this distance," adds he considerably, "we can form a very imperfect judgment of its propriety or necessity. I have the greatest reliance in General Lincoln's prudence, but I cannot forbear dreading the event."

His solicitude for the safety of the South was increased, by

hearing of the embarkation at New York of two thousand five hundred British and Hessian troops, under Lord Rawdon, re-enforcements for Sir Henry Clinton. It seemed evident the enemy intended to push their operations with vigor at the South; perhaps, to make it the principal theatre of the war. "We are now beginning," said Washington, "to experience the fatal consequences of the policy which delayed calling upon the States for their quotas of men in time to arrange and prepare them for the duties of the field. What to do for the Southern States, without involving consequences equally alarming in this quarter, I know not."

Gladly would he have hastened to the South in person, but at this moment his utmost vigilance was required to keep watch upon New York and maintain the security of the Hudson, the vital part of the confederacy. The weak state of the American means of warfare in both quarters, presented a choice of difficulties. The South needed support. Could the North give it without exposing itself to ruin, since the enemy, by means of their ships, could suddenly unite their forces, and fall upon any point that they might consider weak? Such were the perplexities to which he was continually subjected, in having, with scanty means, to provide for the security of a vast extent of country, and with land forces merely, to contend with an amphibious enemy.

"Congress will better conceive in how delicate a situation we stand," writes he, "when I inform them, that the whole operating force present on this and the other side of the North River, amounts only to ten thousand four hundred rank and file, of which about two thousand eight hundred will have completed their term of service by the last of May; while the enemy's regular force at New York and its dependencies, must amount, upon a moderate calculation, to about eleven thousand rank and file. Our situation is more critical from the impossibility of concentrating our force, as well for the want of the means of taking the field, as on account of the early period of the season."<sup>1</sup>

Looking, however, as usual, to the good of the whole Union, he determined to leave something at hazard in the Middle States, where the country was internally so strong, and yield further succor to the Southern States, which had not equal military advantages. With the consent of Congress, therefore, he put the Maryland line under marching orders, together with the

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to the President, April 2.

Delaware regiment, which acted with it, and the first regiment of artillery.

The Baron De Kalb, now at the head of the Maryland division, was instructed to conduct this detachment with all haste to the aid of General Lincoln. He might not arrive in time to prevent the fall of Charleston, but he might assist to arrest the progress of the enemy and save the Carolinas.

Washington had been put upon his guard of late against intrigues, forming by members of the old Conway cabal, who intended to take advantage of every military disaster to destroy confidence in him. His steady mind, however, was not to be shaken by suspicion. "Against intrigues of this kind incident to every man of a public station," said he, "his best support will be a faithful discharge of his duty, and he must rely on the justice of his country for the event."

His feelings at the present juncture are admirably expressed in a letter to the Baron De Steuben. "The prospect, my dear Baron, is gloomy, and the storm threatens, but I hope we shall extricate ourselves, and bring every thing to a prosperous issue. I have been so inured to difficulties, in the course of this contest, that I have learned to look upon them with more tranquillity than formerly. Those which now present themselves, no doubt require vigorous exertions to overcome them, *and I am far from despairing of doing it.*"<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXIV.

EVILS OF THE CONTINENTAL CURRENCY — MILITARY REFORMS PROPOSED BY WASHINGTON — CONGRESS JEALOUS OF MILITARY POWER — COMMITTEE OF THREE SENT TO CONFER WITH WASHINGTON — LOSSES BY DEPRECIATION OF THE CURRENCY TO BE MADE GOOD TO THE TROOPS — ARRIVAL OF LAFAYETTE — SCHEME FOR A COMBINED ATTACK UPON NEW YORK — ARNOLD HAS DEBTS AND DIFFICULTIES — HIS PROPOSALS TO THE FRENCH MINISTER — ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO THE ARMY — MUTINY OF THE CONNECTICUT TROOPS — WASHINGTON WRITES TO REED FOR AID FROM PENNSYLVANIA — GOOD EFFECTS OF HIS LETTER.

We have cited the depreciation of the currency as a main cause of the difficulties and distresses of the army. The troops were paid in paper money at its nominal value. A memorial of the

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings, vii. 10.



officers of the Jersey line to the legislature of their State, represented the depreciation to be so great, that four months' pay of a private soldier would not procure for his family a single bushel of wheat; the pay of a colonel would not purchase oats for his horse, and a common laborer or express rider could earn four times the pay in paper of an American officer.

Congress, too, in its exigencies, being destitute of the power of levying taxes, which vested in the State governments, devolved upon those governments, in their separate capacities, the business of supporting the army. This produced a great inequality in the condition of the troops; according to the means and the degree of liberality of their respective States. Some States furnished their troops amply, not only with clothing, but with many comforts and conveniences; others were more contracted in their supplies; while others left their troops almost destitute. Some of the States, too, undertook to make good to their troops the loss in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency. As this was not general, it increased the inequality of condition. Those who fared worse than others were incensed, not only against their own State, but against the confederacy. They were disgusted with a service that made such injurious distinctions. Some of the officers resigned, finding it impossible, under actual circumstances, to maintain an appearance suitable to their rank. The men had not this resource. They murmured and showed a tendency to seditious combinations.

These, and other defects in the military system, were pressed by Washington upon the attention of Congress in a letter to the President: "It were devoutly to be wished," observed he, "that a plan could be devised by which every thing relating to the army could be conducted on a general principle, under the direction of Congress. This alone can give harmony and consistency to our military establishment, and I am persuaded it will be infinitely conducive to public economy."<sup>1</sup>

In consequence of this letter it was proposed in Congress to send a committee of three of its members to head-quarters to consult with the commander-in-chief, and, in conjunction with him, to effect such reforms and changes in the various departments of the army as might be deemed necessary. Warm debates ensued. It was objected that this would put too much power into a few hands, and especially into those of the com-

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings, Sparks, vol. vii. p. 11.

mander-in-chief; "*that his influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of the army, joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtues to such temptations.*"<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing passage from a despatch of the French minister to his government, is strongly illustrative of the cautious jealousy still existing in Congress with regard to military power, even though wielded by Washington.

After a prolonged debate, a committee of three was chosen by ballot; it consisted of General Schuyler and Messrs. John Matthews, and Nathaniel Peabody. It was a great satisfaction to Washington to have his old friend and coadjutor, Schuyler, near him in this capacity, in which, he declared, no man could be more useful, "from his perfect knowledge of the resources of the country, the activity of his temper, his fruitfulness of expedients, and his sound military sense."<sup>2</sup>

The committee, on arriving at the camp, found the disastrous state of affairs had not been exaggerated. For five months the army had been unpaid. Every department was destitute of money or credit; there were rarely provisions for six days in advance; on some occasions the troops had been for several successive days without meat; there was no forage; the medical department had neither tea, chocolate, wine, nor spirituous liquors of any kind. "Yet the men," said Washington, "have borne their distress in general, with a firmness and patience never exceeded, and every commendation is due to the officers for encouraging them to it by exhortation and example. They have suffered equally with the men, and, their relative situations considered, rather more." Indeed, we have it from another authority, that many officers for some time lived on bread and cheese, rather than take any of the scanty allowance of meat from the men.<sup>3</sup>

To soothe the discontents of the army, and counteract the alarming effects of the depreciation of the currency, Congress now adopted the measure already observed by some of the States, and engaged to make good to the Continental and the independent troops the difference in the value of their pay caused by this depreciation; and that all moneys or other articles heretofore received by them, should be considered as

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings, Sparks, vol. vii. p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Washington to James Duane, Sparks, vol. vii. 34.

<sup>3</sup> General William Laine to Joseph Reed. Reed's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 201.

advanced on account, and comprehended at their just value in the final settlement.

At this gloomy crisis came a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, dated April 27, announcing his arrival at Boston. Washington's eyes, we are told, were suffused with tears as he read this most welcome epistle, and the warmth with which he replied to it, showed his affectionate regard for this young nobleman. "I received your letter," writes he, "with all the joy that the sincerest friendship could dictate, and with that impatience which an ardent desire to see you could not fail to inspire. . . . I most sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival in America, and shall embrace you with all the warmth of an affectionate friend when you come to head-quarters, where a bed is prepared for you."

He would immediately have sent a troop of horse to escort the marquis through the tory settlements between Morristown and the Hudson, had he known the route he intended to take; the latter, however, arrived safe at head-quarters on the 12th of May, where he was welcomed with acclamations, for he was popular with both officers and soldiers. Washington folded him in his arms in a truly paternal embrace, and they were soon closeted together to talk over the state of affairs, when Lafayette made known the result of his visit to France. His generous efforts at court had been crowned with success, and he brought the animating intelligence that a French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, was to put to sea early in April, bringing a body of troops under the Count de Rochambeau, and might soon be expected on the coast to co-operate with the American forces; this, however, he was at liberty to make known only to Washington and Congress.

Remaining but a single day at head-quarters, he hastened on to the seat of government, where he met the reception which his generous enthusiasm in the cause of American Independence had so fully merited. Congress, in a resolution on the 16th of May pronounced his return to America to resume his command a fresh proof of the disinterested zeal and persevering attachment which had secured him the public confidence and applause, and received with pleasure a "tender of the further services of so gallant and meritorious an officer."

Within three days after the departure of the marquis from Morristown, Washington, in a letter to him, gave his idea of the plan which it would be proper for the French fleet and army to pursue on their arrival upon the coast. The reduction of New York he considered the first enterprise to be attempted by

the co-operating forces. The whole effective land force of the enemy he estimated at about eight thousand regulars and four thousand refugees, with some militia, on which no great dependence could be placed. Their naval force consisted of one seventy-four gun ship, and three or four small frigates. In this situation of affairs the French fleet might enter the harbor and gain possession of it without difficulty, cut off its communications, and, with the co-operation of the American army, oblige the city to capitulate. He advised Lafayette, therefore, to write to the French commanders, urging them, on their arrival on the coast, to proceed with their land and naval forces, with all expedition, to Sandy Hook, and there await further advices; should they learn, however, that the expedition under Sir Henry Clinton had returned from the South to New York, they were to proceed to Rhode Island.

General Arnold was at this time in Philadelphia, and his connection with subsequent events requires a few words concerning his career, daily becoming more perplexed. He had again petitioned Congress on the subject of his accounts. The Board of Treasury had made a report far short of his wishes. He had appealed, and his appeal, together with all the documents connected with the case, was referred to a committee of three. The old doubts and difficulties continued: there was no prospect of a speedy settlement; he was in extremity. The French minister, M. de Luzerne, was at hand; a generous-spirited man, who had manifested admiration of his military character. To him Arnold now repaired in his exigency; made a passionate representation of the hardships of his case; the inveterate hostility he had experienced from Pennsylvania; the ingratitude of his country; the disorder brought into his private affairs by the war, and the necessity he should be driven to of abandoning his profession, unless he could borrow a sum equal to the amount of his debts. Such a loan, he intimated, it might be the interest of the King of France to grant, thereby securing the attachment and gratitude of an American general of his rank and influence.

The French minister was too much of a diplomatist not to understand the bearing of the intimation, but he shrank from it, observing that the service required would degrade both parties. "When the envoy of a foreign power," said he, "gives, or if you will, lends money, it is ordinarily to corrupt those who receive it, and to make them the creatures of the sovereign whom he serves; or rather, he corrupts without persuading; he buys and does not secure. But the league entered into

between the king and the United States, is the work of justice and of the wisest policy. It has for its basis a reciprocal interest and good-will. In the mission with which I am charged, my true glory consists in fulfilling it without intrigue or cabal; without resorting to any secret practices, and by the force alone of the conditions of the alliance."

M. de Luzerne endeavored to soften this repulse and reproof, by complimenting Arnold on the splendor of his past career, and by alluding to the field of glory still before him; but the pressure of debts was not to be lightened by compliments, and Arnold retired from the interview, a mortified and desperate man.

He was in this mood when he heard of the expected arrival of aid from France, and the talk of an active campaign. It seemed as if his military ambition was once more aroused. To General Schuyler, who was about to visit the camp as one of the committee, he wrote on the 25th of May, expressing a determination to rejoin the army, although his wounds still made it painful to walk or ride, and intimated, that, in his present condition, the command at West Point would be best suited to him.

In reply, General Schuyler wrote from Morristown, June 2, that he had put Arnold's letter into Washington's hands, and added: "He expressed a desire to do whatever was agreeable to you, dwelt on your abilities, your merits, your sufferings, and on the well-earned claims you have on your country, and intimated, that as soon as his arrangements for the campaign should take place, he would properly consider you."

In the mean time, the army with which Washington was to co-operate in the projected attack upon New York, was so reduced by the departure of troops whose term had expired, and the tardiness in furnishing recruits, that it did not amount quite to four thousand rank and file, fit for duty. Among these was a prevalent discontent. Their pay was five months in arrear; if now paid, it would be in Continental currency, without allowance for depreciation, consequently, almost worthless for present purposes.

A long interval of scarcity and several days of actual famine, brought matters to a crisis. On the 25th of May, in the dusk of the evening, two regiments of the Connecticut line assembled on their parade by beat of drum, and declared their intention to march home bag and baggage, "or, at best, to gain subsistence at the point of the bayonet." Colonel Meigs, while endeavoring to suppress the mutiny, was struck by one of the

soldiers. Some officers of the Pennsylvania line came to his assistance, parading their regiments. Every argument and expostulation was used with the mutineers. They were reminded of their past good conduct, of the noble objects for which they were contending, and of the future indemnifications promised by Congress. Their answer was, that their sufferings were too great to be allayed by promises, in which they had little faith; they wanted present relief, and some present substantial recompense for their services.

It was with difficulty they could be prevailed upon to return to their huts. Indeed, a few turned out a second time, with their packs, and were not to be pacified. These were arrested and confined.

This mutiny, Washington declared, had given him infinitely more concern than any thing that had ever happened, especially as he had no means of paying the troops excepting in Continental money, which, said he, "is evidently impracticable from the immense quantity it would require to pay them as much as would make up the depreciation." His uneasiness was increased by finding that printed handbills were secretly disseminated in his camp by the enemy, containing addresses to the soldiery, persuading them to desert.<sup>1</sup>

In this alarming state of destitution, Washington looked round anxiously for bread for his famishing troops. New York, Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, were what he termed his "flour country." Virginia was sufficiently tasked to supply the South. New York, by legislative coercion, had already given all that she could spare from the subsistence of her inhabitants. Jersey was exhausted by the long residence of the army. Maryland had made great exertions, and might still do something more, and Delaware might contribute handsomely, in proportion to her extent: but Pennsylvania was now the chief dependence, for that State was represented to be full of flour. Washington's letter of the 16th of December, to President Reed, had obtained temporary relief from that quarter; he now wrote to him a second time, and still more earnestly. "Every idea you can form of our distresses, will fall short of the reality. There is such a combination of circumstances to exhaust the patience of the soldiery, that it begins at length to be worn out, and we see in every line of the army, features of mutiny and sedition. All our departments, all our operations, are at a stand, and unless a system very different from

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the President of Congress, May 27. Sparks, vii. 54.

that which has a long time prevailed, be immediately adopted throughout the States, our affairs must soon become desperate beyond the possibility of recovery."

Nothing discouraged Washington more than the lethargy that seemed to deaden the public mind. He speaks of it with a degree of despondency scarcely ever before exhibited. "I have almost ceased to hope. The country is in such a state of insensibility and indifference to its interests, that I dare not flatter myself with any change for the better." And again, — "The present juncture is so interesting that if it does not produce correspondent exertions, it will be a proof that motives of honor, public good, and even self-preservation, have lost their influence on our minds. This is a decisive moment; one of the most, I will go further, and say, *the* most important America has seen. The court of France has made a glorious effort for our deliverance, and if we disappoint its intentions by our supineness, we must become contemptible in the eyes of all mankind, nor can we after that venture to confide that our allies will persist in an attempt to establish what, it will appear, we want inclination or ability to assist them in." With these and similar observations, he sought to rouse President Reed to extraordinary exertions. "This is a time," writes he, "to hazard and to take a tone of energy and decision. All parties but the disaffected will acquiesce in the necessity and give it their support." He urges Reed to press upon the legislature of Pennsylvania the policy of investing its executive with plenipotentiary powers. "I should then," writes he, "expect every thing from your ability and zeal. This is no time for formality or ceremony. The crisis in every point of view is extraordinary, and extraordinary expedients are necessary. I am decided in this opinion."

His letter procured relief for the army from the legislature, and a resolve empowering the president and council, during its recess, to declare martial law, should circumstances render it expedient. "This," observes Reed, "gives us a power of doing what may be necessary without attending to the ordinary course of law, and we shall endeavor to exercise it with prudence and moderation."<sup>1</sup>

In like manner, Washington endeavored to rouse the dormant fire of Congress, and impart to it his own indomitable energy. "Certain I am," writes he to a member of that body, "unless Congress speak in a more decisive tone, unless they

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks, Corr. of the Rev., vol. ii. p. 466.

are vested with powers by the several States, competent to the purposes of war, or assume them as matters of right, and they and the States respectively act with more energy than they have hitherto done, that our cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. By ill-timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies, we incur enormous expenses and derive no benefit from them. One State will comply with a requisition of Congress; another neglects to do it; a third executes it by halves; and all differ, either in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up-hill; and, while such a system as the present one, or rather want of one, prevails, we shall ever be unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage — I see one head gradually changing into thirteen. I see one army branching into thirteen, which instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controlling power of the United States, are considering themselves dependent on their respective States. In a word, I see the powers of Congress declining too fast for the consideration and respect which are due to them as the great representative body of America, and I am fearful of the consequences.”<sup>1</sup>

At this juncture came official intelligence from the South, to connect which with the general course of events, requires a brief notice of the operations of Sir Henry Clinton in that quarter.

## CHAPTER XXV.

SIEGE OF CHARLESTON CONTINUED — BRITISH SHIPS ENTER THE HARBOR — BRITISH TROOPS MARCH FROM SAVANNAH — TARLETON AND HIS DRAGOONS — HIS BRUSH WITH COLONEL WASHINGTON — CHARLESTON RE-ENFORCED BY WOODFORD — TARLETON'S EXPLOITS AT MONK'S CORNER — AT LANEAU'S FERRY — SIR HENRY CLINTON RE-ENFORCED — CHARLESTON CAPITULATES — AFFAIR OF TARLETON AND BUFORD ON THE WAXHAW — SIR HENRY CLINTON EMBARKS FOR NEW YORK.

In a preceding chapter we left the British fleet under Admiral Arbuthnot, preparing to force its way into the harbor of Charleston. Several days elapsed before the ships were able, by taking out their guns, provisions, and water, and availing

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Joseph Jones. Sparks, vii. 67.



themselves of wind and tide, to pass the bar. They did so on the 20th of March, with but slight opposition from several galleys. Commodore Whipple, then, seeing the vast superiority of their force, made a second retrograde move, stationing some of his ships in Cooper River, and sinking the rest at its mouth so as to prevent the enemy from running up the river, and cutting off communication with the country on the east: the crews and heavy cannon were landed to aid in the defence of the town.

The re-enforcements expected from the North were not yet arrived: the militia of the State did not appear at Governor Rutledge's command, and other reliances were failing. "Many of the North Carolina militia whose terms have expired leave us to-day," writes Lincoln to Washington, on the 20th of March. "They cannot be persuaded to remain longer, though the enemy are in our neighborhood."<sup>1</sup>

At this time the re-enforcement which Sir Henry Clinton had ordered from Savannah were marching toward the Cambridge under Brigadier-General Patterson. On his flank moved Major Ferguson with a corps of riflemen, and Major Cochrane with the infantry of the British legion; two brave and enterprising officers. It was a toilsome march, through swamps and difficult passes. Being arrived in the neighborhood of Port Royal, where Tarleton had succeeded, though indifferently, in remounting his dragoons, Patterson sent orders to that officer to join him. Tarleton hastened to obey the order. His arrival was timely. The Carolina militia having heard that all the British horses had perished at sea, made an attack on the front of General Patterson's force, supposing it to be without cavalry. To their surprise, Tarleton charged them with his dragoons, routed them, took several prisoners, and, what was more acceptable, a number of horses, some of the militia, he says, "being accoutred as cavaliers."

Tarleton had soon afterwards to encounter a worthy antagonist in Colonel William Washington, the same cavalry officer who had distinguished himself at Trenton, and was destined to distinguish himself still more in this Southern campaign. He is described as being six feet in height, broad, stout and corpulent. Bold in the field, careless in the camp; kind to his soldiers; harassing to his enemies: gay and good-humored; with an upright heart and a generous hand, a universal favorite. He was now at the head of a body of Continental

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence of the Rev., vol. II. p. 419.

cavalry, consisting of his own and Bland's light horse, and Pulaski's hussars. A brush took place in the neighborhood of Rantoul's Bridge. Colonel Washington had the advantage, took several prisoners, and drove back the dragoons of the British legion, but durst not pursue them for want of infantry.<sup>1</sup>

On the 7th of April, Brigadier-General Woodford with seven hundred Virginia troops, after a forced march of five hundred miles in thirty days, crossed from the east side of Cooper River, by the only passage now open, and threw himself into Charleston. It was a timely re-enforcement, and joyfully welcomed; for the garrison, when in greatest force, amounted to little more than two thousand regulars and one thousand North Carolina militia.

About the same time Admiral Arbuthnot, in the *Roebuck*, passed Sullivan's Island, with a fresh southerly breeze, at the head of a squadron of seven armed vessels and two transports. "It was a magnificent spectacle, satisfactory to the royalists," writes the admiral. The whigs regarded it with a rueful eye. Colonel Pinckney opened a heavy cannonade from the batteries of Fort Moultrie. The ships thundered in reply, and clouds of smoke were raised, under the cover of which they slipped by, with no greater loss than twenty-seven men killed and wounded. A store-ship which followed the squadron ran aground, was set on fire and abandoned, and subsequently blew up. The ships took a position near Fort Johnston, just without the range of the shot from the American batteries. After the passage of the ships, Colonel Pinckney and a part of the garrison withdrew from Fort Moultrie.

The enemy had by this time completed his first parallel, and the town being almost entirely invested by sea and land, received a joint summons from the British general and admiral to surrender. "Sixty days have passed," writes Lincoln in reply, "since it has been known that your intentions against this town were hostile, in which time has been afforded to abandon it, but duty and inclination point to the propriety of supporting it to the last extremity."

The British batteries were now opened. The siege was carried on deliberately by regular parallels, and on a scale of magnitude scarcely warranted by the moderate strength of the place. A great object with the besieged was to keep open the channel of communication with the country by the Cooper River, the last that remained by which they could receive re-enforce-

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, iii. p. 352 — see also Tarleton, *Hist. Campaign*, p. 8.

ments and supplies, or could retreat if necessary. For this purpose, Governor Rutledge, leaving the town in the care of Lieutenant-Governor Gadsden, and one-half of the executive council, set off with the other half, and endeavored to rouse the militia between the Cooper and Santee Rivers. His success was extremely limited. Two militia posts were established by him; one between these rivers, the other at a ferry on the Santee; some regular troops, also, had been detached by Lincoln to throw up works about nine miles above the town, on the Wando, a branch of Cooper River, and at Lempriere's Point; and Brigadier-General Huger,<sup>1</sup> with a force of militia and Continental cavalry, including those of Colonel William Washington, was stationed at Monk's Corner, about thirty miles above Charleston, to guard the passes at the head waters of Cooper River.

Sir Henry Clinton, when proceeding from his second parallel, detached Lieutenant-Colonel Webster with fourteen hundred men to break up these posts. The most distant one was that of Huger's cavalry at Monk's Corner. The surprisal of this was intrusted to Tarleton, who, with his dragoons, was in Webster's advanced guard. He was to be seconded by Major Patrick Ferguson with his riflemen.

Ferguson was a fit associate for Tarleton, in hardy, scrambling, partisan enterprise: equally intrepid and determined, but cooler and more open to impulses of humanity. He was the son of an eminent Scotch judge, had entered the army at an early age, and served in the German wars. The British extolled him as superior to the American Indians, in the use of the rifle, in short, as being the best marksman living. He had invented one which could be loaded at the breech and discharged seven times in a minute. It had been used with effect by his corps. Washington, according to British authority, had owed his life at the battle of Germantown, solely to Ferguson's ignorance of his person, having repeatedly been within reach of the colonel's unerring rifle.<sup>2</sup>

On the evening of the 13th of April, Tarleton moved with the van towards Monk's Corner. A night march had been judged the most advisable. It was made in profound silence and by unfrequented roads. In the course of the march, a negro was descried attempting to avoid notice. He was seized. A letter was found on him from an officer in Huger's camp, from which Tarleton learned something of its situation and the distribution of the troops. A few dollars gained the services of

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Huguee — of French Huguenot descent.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Register, 1781, p. 52.

the negro as a guide. The surprisal of General Hunger's camp was complete. Several officers and men who attempted to defend themselves, were killed or wounded. General Huger, Colonel Washington, with many others, officers and men, escaped in the darkness, to the neighboring swamps. One hundred officers, dragoons and hussars, were taken, with about four hundred horses and near fifty wagons, laden with arms, clothing and ammunition.

Biggin's Bridge on Cooper River was likewise secured, and the way opened for Colonel Webster to advance nearly to the head of the passes, in such a manner as to shut up Charleston entirely.

In the course of the maraud which generally accompanies a surprisal of the kind, several dragoons of the British legion broke into a house in the neighborhood of Monk's Corner, and maltreated and attempted violence upon ladies residing there. The ladies escaped to Monk's Corner, where they were protected, and a carriage furnished to convey them to a place of safety. The dragoons were apprehended and brought to Monk's Corner, where by this time Colonel Webster had arrived. Major Ferguson, we are told, was for putting the dragoons to instant death, but Colonel Webster did not think his powers warranted such a measure. "They were sent to head-quarters," adds the historian, "and, I believe, afterwards tried and whipped."<sup>1</sup>

We gladly record one instance in which the atrocities which disgraced this invasion met with some degree of punishment; and we honor the rough soldier, Ferguson, for the fiat of "instant death," with which he would have requited the most infamous and dastardly outrage that brutalizes warfare.

During the progress of the siege, General Lincoln held repeated councils of war, in which he manifested a disposition to evacuate the place. This measure was likewise urged by General Du Portail, who had penetrated, by secret ways, into the town. The inhabitants, however, in the agony of alarm, implored Lincoln not to abandon them to the mercies of an infuriated and licentious soldiery, and the general, easy and kind-hearted, yielded to their entreaties.

The American cavalry had gradually reassembled on the north of the Santee, under Colonel White of New Jersey, where they were joined by some militia infantry, and by Colonel William Washington, with such of his dragoons as

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman, ii. 183.

had escaped at Monk's Corner. Cornwallis had committed the country between Cooper and Wando Rivers to Tarleton's charge, with orders to be continually on the move with the cavalry and infantry of the legion; to watch over the landing-places; obtain intelligence from the town, the Santee River and the back country, and to burn such stores as might fall into his hands, rather than risk their being retaken by the enemy.

Hearing of the fortuitous assemblage of American troops, Tarleton came suddenly upon them by surprise at Laneau's Ferry. It was one of his bloody exploits. Five officers and thirty-six men were killed and wounded, and seven officers and six dragoons taken, with horses, arms and equipments. Colonels White, Washington and Jamieson, with other officers and men, threw themselves into the river, and escaped by swimming; while some, who followed their example, perished.

The arrival of a re-enforcement of three thousand men from New York enabled Sir Henry Clinton to throw a powerful detachment, under Lord Cornwallis, to the east of Cooper River, to complete the investment of the town and cut off all retreat. Fort Moultrie surrendered. The batteries of the third parallel were opened upon the town. They were so near, that the Hessian yagers, or sharp-shooters, could pick off the garrison while at their guns or on the parapets. This fire was kept up for two days. The besiegers crossed the canal; pushed up a double sap to the inside of the abatis, and prepared to make an assault by sea and land.

All hopes of successful defence were at an end. The works were in ruins; the guns almost all dismounted; the garrison exhausted with fatigue, the provisions nearly consumed. The inhabitants, dreading the horrors of an assault, joined in a petition to General Lincoln, and prevailed upon him to offer a surrender on terms which had already been offered and rejected. These terms were still granted, and the capitulation was signed on the 12th of May. The garrison were allowed some of the honors of war. They were to march out and deposit their arms between the canal and the works, but the drums were not to beat a British march nor the colors to be uncased. The Continental troops and seamen were to be allowed their baggage, but were to remain prisoners of war. The officers of the army and navy were to retain their servants, swords and pistols, and their baggage unsearched; and were permitted to sell their horses; but not to remove them out of the

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town. The citizens and the militia were to be considered prisoners on parole; the latter to be permitted to return home, and both to be protected in person and property as long as they kept their parole. Among the prisoners, were the lieutenant-governor and five of the council.

The loss of the British in the siege was seventy-six killed and one hundred and eighty-nine wounded; that of the Americans nearly the same. The prisoners taken by the enemy, exclusive of the sailors, amounted to five thousand six hundred and eighteen men; comprising every male adult in the city. The Continental troops did not exceed two thousand, five hundred of whom were in the hospital; the rest were citizens and militia.

Sir Henry Clinton considered the fall of Charleston decisive of the fate of South Carolina. To complete the subjugation of the country, he planned three expeditions into the interior. One, under Lieutenant-Colonel Brown, was to move up the Savannah River to Augusta, on the borders of Georgia. Another, under Lieutenant-Colonel Cruger, was to proceed up the south-west side of the Santee River to the district of Ninety-Six,<sup>1</sup> a fertile and salubrious region, between the Savannah and the Saluda Rivers: while a third, under Cornwallis, was to cross the Santee, march up the north-east bank, and strike at a corps of troops under Colonel Buford, which were retreating to North Carolina with artillery and a number of wagons, laden with arms, ammunition and clothing.

Colonel Buford, in fact, had arrived too late for the relief of Charleston, and was now making a retrograde move; he had come on with three hundred and eighty troops of the Virginia line, and two field-pieces, and had been joined by Colonel Washington with a few of his cavalry that had survived the surprisal by Tarleton. As Buford was moving with celerity, and had the advantage of distance, Cornwallis detached Tarleton in pursuit of him, with one hundred and seventy dragoons, a hundred mounted infantry, and a three-pounder. The bold partisan pushed forward with his usual ardor and rapidity. The weather was sultry, many of his horses gave out through fatigue and heat; he pressed others by the way, leaving behind such of his troops as could not keep pace with him. After a day and night of forced march, he arrived about dawn at Rugeley's Mills. Buford, he was told, was about twenty miles in advance of him, pressing on with all

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<sup>1</sup> So called in the early times from being ninety-six miles from the principal town of the Cherokee nation.



diligence to join another corps of Americans. Tarleton continued his march; the horses of the three-pounder were knocked up and unable to proceed; his wearied troops were continually dropping in the rear. Still he urged forward, anxious to overtake Buford before he could form a junction with the force he was seeking. To detain him he sent forward Captain Kinlock of his legion with a flag, and the following letter:

"SIR, — Resistance being vain, to prevent the effusion of blood, I make offers which can never be repeated. You are now almost encompassed by a corps of seven hundred light troops on horseback; half of that number are infantry with cannons. Earl Cornwallis is likewise within reach with nine British regiments. I warn you of the temerity of further inimical proceedings."

He concluded by offering the same conditions granted to the troops at Charleston; "if you are rash enough to reject them," added he, "the blood be upon your head."

Kinlock overtook Colonel Buford in full march on the banks of the Waxhaw, a stream on the border of North Carolina, and delivered the summons. The colonel read the letter without coming to a halt, detained the flag for some time in conversation, and then returned the following note:

"SIR, — I reject your proposals, and shall defend myself to the last extremity.

"I have the honor," etc.

Tarleton, who had never ceased to press forward, came upon Buford's rear-guard about three o'clock in the afternoon, and captured a sergeant and four dragoons. Buford had not expected so prompt an appearance of the enemy. He hastily drew up his men in order of battle, in an open wood, on the right of the road. His artillery and wagons, which were in the advance escorted by part of his infantry, were ordered to continue on their march.

There appears to have been some confusion on the part of the Americans, and they had an impetuous foe to deal with. Before they were well prepared for action they were attacked in front and on both flanks by cavalry and mounted infantry. Tarleton, who advanced at the head of thirty chosen dragoons and some infantry, states that when within fifty paces of the

Continental infantry, they presented, but he heard their officers command them to retain their fire until the British cavalry were nearer. It was not until the latter were within ten yards that there was a partial discharge of musketry. Several of the dragoons suffered by this fire. Tarleton himself was unhorsed, but his troopers rode on. The American battalion was broken; most of the men threw down their arms and begged for quarter, but were cut down without mercy. One hundred and thirteen were slain on the spot, and one hundred and fifty so mangled and maimed that they could not be removed. Colonel Buford and a few of the cavalry escaped, as did about a hundred of the infantry, who were with the baggage in the advance. Fifty prisoners were all that were in a condition to be carried off by Tarleton as trophies of this butchery.

The whole British loss was two officers and three privates killed, and one officer and fourteen privates wounded. What, then, could excuse this horrible carnage of an almost prostrate enemy? We give Tarleton's own excuse for it. It commenced, he says, at the time he was dismounted, and before he could mount another horse; and his cavalry were exasperated by a report that he was slain. Cornwallis apparently accepted this excuse, for he approved of his conduct in the expedition, and recommended him as worthy of some distinguished mark of royal favor. The world at large, however, have not been so easily satisfied, and the massacre at the Waxhaw has remained a sanguinary stain on the reputation of that impetuous soldier.

The two other detachments which had been sent out by Clinton, met with nothing but submission. The people in general, considering resistance hopeless, accepted the proffered protection, and conformed to its humiliating terms. One class of the population in this colony seems to have regarded the invaders as deliverers. "All the negroes," writes Tarleton, "men, women and children, upon the appearance of any detachment of king's troops, thought themselves absolved from all respect to their American masters, and entirely released from servitude. They quitted the plantations and followed the army."<sup>1</sup>

Sir Henry now persuaded himself that South Carolina was subdued, and proceeded to station garrisons in various parts, to maintain it in subjection. In the fulness of his confidence, he issued a proclamation on the 3d of June, discharging all the military prisoners from their paroles after the 20th of the

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<sup>1</sup> Tarleton's Hist. of Campaign, p. 89.

month, excepting those captured in Fort Moultrie and Charleston. All thus released from their parole were reinstated in the rights and duties of British subjects; but, at the same time, they were bound to take an active part in support of the government hitherto opposed by them. Thus the protection afforded them while prisoners was annulled by an arbitrary fiat — neutrality was at an end. All were to be ready to take up arms at a moment's notice. Those who had families were to form a militia for home defence. Those who had none, were to serve with the royal forces. All who should neglect to return to their allegiance, or should refuse to take up arms against the independence of their country, were to be considered as rebels and treated accordingly.

Having struck a blow, which, as he conceived, was to insure the subjugation of the South, Sir Henry embarked for New York on the 5th of June, with a part of his forces, leaving the residue under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who was to carry the war into North Carolina, and thence into Virginia.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

KNYPHAUSEN MARAUDS THE JERSEYS — SACKING OF CONNECTICUT FARMS — MURDER OF MRS. CALDWELL — ARRIVAL AND MOVEMENTS OF SIR HENRY CLINTON — SPRINGFIELD BURNT — THE JERSEYS EVACUATED.

A HANDBILL published by the British authorities in New York, reached Washington's camp on the 1st of June, and made known the surrender of Charleston. A person from Amboy reported, moreover, that on the 30th of May he had seen one hundred sail of vessels enter Sandy Hook. These might bring Sir Henry Clinton with the whole or part of his force. In that case, flushed with his recent success, he might proceed immediately up the Hudson, and make an attempt upon West Point, in the present distressed condition of the garrison. So thinking, Washington wrote to General Howe, who commanded that important post, to put him on his guard, and took measures to have him furnished with supplies.

The report concerning the fleet proved to be erroneous, but on the 6th of June came a new alarm. The enemy, it was said, were actually landing in force at Elizabethtown Point, to carry fire and sword into the Jerseys!

It was even so. Knyphausen, through spies and emissaries, had received exaggerated accounts of the recent outbreak in Washington's camp, and of the general discontent among the people of New Jersey; and was persuaded that a sudden show of military protection, following up the news of the capture of Charleston, would produce a general desertion among Washington's troops, and rally back the inhabitants of the Jerseys to their allegiance to the crown.

In this belief he projected a descent into the Jerseys with about five thousand men, and some light artillery, who were to cross in divisions in the night of the 5th of June from Staten Island to Elizabethtown Point.

The first division, led by Brigadier-General Sterling, actually landed before dawn of the 6th, and advanced as silently as possible. The heavy and measured tramp of the troops, however, caught the ear of an American sentinel stationed at a fork where the roads from the old and new point joined. He challenged the dimly descried mass as it approached, and receiving no answer, fired into it. That shot wounded General Sterling in the thigh, and ultimately proved mortal. The wounded general was carried back, and Knyphausen took his place.

This delayed the march until sunrise, and gave time for the troops of the Jersey line, under Colonel Elias Dayton, stationed in Elizabethtown, to assemble. They were too weak in numbers, however, to withstand the enemy, but retreated in good order, skirmishing occasionally. The invading force passed through the village; in the advance, a squadron of dragoons of Simcoe's regiment of Queen's Rangers, with drawn swords and glittering helmets; followed by British and Hessian infantry.<sup>1</sup>

Signal guns and signal fires were rousing the country. The militia and yeomanry armed themselves with such weapons as were at hand, and hastened to their alarm posts. The enemy took the old road, by what was called Galloping Hill, towards the village of Connecticut Farms; fired upon from behind walls and thickets by the hasty levies of the country.

At Connecticut Farms, the retreating troops under Dayton fell in with the Jersey brigade, under General Maxwell, and a few militia joining them, the Americans were enabled to make some stand, and even to hold the enemy in check. The latter, however, brought up several field-pieces, and being re-enforced

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<sup>1</sup> Passages in the Hist. of Elizabethtown, Captain W. C. De Hart.

by a second division which had crossed from Staten Island some time after the first, compelled the Americans again to retreat. Some of the enemy, exasperated at the opposition they had met with throughout their march, and pretending that the inhabitants of this village had fired upon them from their windows, began to pillage and set fire to the houses. It so happened that to this village the Reverend James Caldwell, "the rousing gospel preacher," had removed his family as to a place of safety, after his church at Elizabethtown had been burnt down by the British in January. On the present occasion he had retreated with the regiment to which he was chaplain. His wife, however, remained at the parsonage with her two youngest children, confiding in the protection of Providence, and the humanity of the enemy.

When the sacking of the village took place, she retired with her children into a back room of the house. Her infant of eight months was in the arms of an attendant; she herself was seated on the side of a bed holding a child of three years by the hand, and was engaged in prayer. All was terror and confusion in the village; when suddenly a musket was discharged in at the window. Two balls struck her in the breast, and she fell dead on the floor. The parsonage and church were set on fire, and it was with difficulty her body was rescued from the flames.

In the mean time Knyphausen was pressing on with his main force towards Morristown. The booming of alarm-guns had roused the country; every valley was pouring out its yeomanry. Two thousand were said to be already in arms below the mountains.

Within half a mile of Springfield Knyphausen halted to reconnoitre. That village, through which passes the road to Springfield, had been made the American rallying-point. It stands at the foot of what are called the Short Hills, on the west side of Rahway River, which runs in front of it. On the bank of the river, General Maxwell's Jersey brigade and the militia of the neighborhood were drawn up to dispute the passage; and on the Short Hills in the rear was Washington with the main body of his forces, not mutinous and in confusion, but all in good order, strongly posted, and ready for action.

Washington had arrived and taken his position that afternoon, prepared to withstand an encounter though not to seek one. All night his camp fires lighted up the Short Hills, and he remained on the alert expecting to be assailed in the morning; but in the morning no enemy was to be seen.

Knyphausen had experienced enough to convince him that he

had been completely misinformed as to the disposition of the Jersey people and of the army. Disappointed as to the main objects of his enterprise, he had retreated under cover of the night, to the place of his debarkation, intending to recross to Staten Island immediately.

In the camp at the Short Hills was the Reverend James Caldwell, whose home had been laid desolate. He was still ignorant of the event, but had passed a night of great anxiety, and, procuring the protection of a flag, hastened back in the morning to Connecticut Farms. He found the village in ashes, and his wife a mangled corpse!

In the course of the day Washington received a letter from Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who was reconnoitring in the neighborhood of Elizabethtown Point. "I have seen the enemy," writes he. "Those in view I calculate at about three thousand. There may be, and probably are, enough others out of sight. They have sent all their horses to the other side except about fifty or sixty. Their baggage has also been sent across, and their wounded. It is not ascertained that any of their infantry have passed on the other side. . . . The present movement may be calculated to draw us down and betray us into an action. They may have desisted from their intention of passing till night, for fear of our falling upon their rear."

As Washington was ignorant of the misinformation which had beguiled Knyphausen into this enterprise, the movements of that general, his sudden advance, and as sudden retreat, were equally inexplicable. At one time, he supposed his inroad to be a mere foraging incursion; then, as Hamilton had suggested, a device to draw him down from his stronghold into the plain, where the superiority of the British force would give them the advantage.

Knyphausen, in fact, had been impeded in crossing his troops to Staten Island, by the low tide and deep muddy shore, which rendered it difficult to embark the cavalry; and by a destructive fire kept up by militia posted along the river banks, and the adjacent woods. In the mean while he had time to reflect on the ridicule that would await him in New York, should his expedition prove fruitless, and end in what might appear a precipitate flight. This produced indecision of mind, and induced him to recall the troops which had already crossed, and which were necessary, he said, to protect his rear.

For several days he lingered with his troops at Elizabethtown and the Point beyond; obliging Washington to exercise unremitting vigilance for the safety of the Jerseys and of the

**Hudson.** It was a great satisfaction to the latter to be joined by Major Henry Lee, who with his troop of horse had hastened on from the vicinity of Philadelphia, where he had recently been stationed.

In the mean time, the tragical fate of Mrs. Caldwell produced almost as much excitement throughout the country as that which had been caused in a preceding year, by the massacre of Miss McCrea. She was connected with some of the first people of New Jersey; was winning in person and character, and universally beloved. Knyphausen was vehemently assailed in the American papers, as if responsible for this atrocious act. The enemy, however, attributed her death to a random shot, discharged in a time of confusion, or to the vengeance of a menial who had a deadly pique against her husband; but the popular voice persisted in execrating it as the wilful and wanton act of a British soldier.

On the 17th of June the fleet from the South actually arrived in the bay of New York, and Sir Henry Clinton landed his troops on Staten Island, but almost immediately re-embarked them; as if meditating an expedition up the river.

Fearing for the safety of West Point, Washington set off on the 21st June, with the main body of his troops, towards Pompton; while General Greene, with Maxwell and Stark's brigades, Lee's dragoons and the militia of the neighborhood, remained encamped on the Short Hills, to cover the country and protect the stores at Morristown.

Washington's movements were slow and wary, unwilling to be far from Greene until better informed of the designs of the enemy. At Rockaway Bridge, about eleven miles beyond Morristown, he received word on the 23d, that the enemy were advancing from Elizabethtown against Springfield. Supposing the military depot at Morristown to be their ultimate object, he detached a brigade to the assistance of Greene, and fell back five or six miles, so as to be in supporting distance of him.

The re-embarkation of the troops at Staten Island had, in fact, been a stratagem of Sir Henry Clinton to divert the attention of Washington, and enable Knyphausen to carry out the enterprise which had hitherto hung fire. No sooner did the latter ascertain that the American commander-in-chief had moved off with his main force towards the Highlands, than he sallied from Elizabethtown five thousand strong, with a large body of cavalry, and fifteen or twenty pieces of artillery; hoping not merely to destroy the public stores at Morristown, but to get possession of those difficult hills and defiles, among

which Washington's army had been so securely posted, and which constituted the strength of that part of the country.

It was early on the morning of the 23d that Knyphausen pushed forward towards Springfield. Beside the main road which passes directly through the village towards Morristown, there is another, north of it, called the Vauxhall road, crossing several small streams, the confluence of which forms the Rahway. These two roads unite beyond the village in the principal pass of the Short Hills. The enemy's troops advanced rapidly in two compact columns, the right one by the Vauxhall road, the other, by the main or direct road. General Greene was stationed among the Short Hills, about a mile above the town. His troops were distributed at various posts, for there were many passes to guard.

At five o'clock in the morning, signal-guns gave notice of the approach of the enemy. The drums beat to arms throughout the camp. The troops were hastily called in from their posts among the mountain passes, and preparations were made to defend the village.

Major Lee, with his dragoons and a picket-guard, was posted on the Vauxhall road, to check the right column of the enemy in its advance. Colonel Dayton, with his regiment of New Jersey militia was to check the left column on the main road. Colonel Angel of Rhode Island, with about two hundred picked men, and a piece of artillery, was to defend a bridge over the Rahway, a little west of the town. Colonel Shreve, stationed with his regiment at a second bridge over a branch of the Rahway east of the town, was to cover, if necessary, the retreat of Colonel Angel. Those parts of Maxwell and Stark's brigades which were not thus detached, were drawn up on high grounds in the rear of the town, having the militia on their flanks.

There was some sharp fighting at a bridge on the Vauxhall road, where Major Lee with his dragoons and picket-guard held the right column at bay; a part of the column, however, forded the stream above the bridge, gained a commanding position, and obliged Lee to retire.

The left column met with similar opposition from Dayton and his Jersey regiment. None showed more ardor in the fight than Caldwell the chaplain. The image of his murdered wife was before his eyes. Finding the men in want of wadding, he galloped to the Presbyterian church and brought thence a quantity of Watts' psalm and hymn books, which he distributed for the purpose among the soldiers. "Now," cried he, "put Watts into them, boys!"



The severest fighting of the day was at the bridge over the Rahway. For upwards of half an hour Colonel Angel defended it with his handful of men against a vastly superior force. One-fourth of his men were either killed or disabled: the loss of the enemy was still more severe. Angel was at length compelled to retire. He did so in good order, carrying off his wounded, and making his way through the village to the bridge beyond it. Here his retreat was bravely covered by Colonel Shreve, but he too was obliged to give way before the overwhelming force of the enemy, and join the brigades of Maxwell and Stark upon the hill.

General Greene, finding his front too much extended for his small force, and that he was in danger of being outflanked on the left by the column pressing forward on the Vauxhall road, took post with his main body on the first range of hills, where the roads were brought near to a point, and passed between him and the height occupied by Stark and Maxwell. He then threw out a detachment which checked the further advance of the right column of the enemy along the Vauxhall road, and secured that pass through the Short Hills. Feeling himself now strongly posted, he awaited with confidence the expected attempt of the enemy to gain the height. No such attempt was made. The resistance already experienced, especially at the bridge, and the sight of militia gathering from various points, dampened the ardor of the hostile commander. He saw that, should he persist in pushing for Morristown, he would have to fight his way through a country abounding with difficult passes, every one of which would be obstinately disputed; and that the enterprise, even if successful, might cost too much, besides taking him too far from New York, at a time when a French armament might be expected.

Before the brigade detached by Washington arrived at the scene of action, therefore, the enemy had retreated. Previous to their retreat they wreaked upon Springfield the same vengeance they had inflicted on Connecticut Farms. The whole village, excepting four houses, was reduced to ashes. Their second retreat was equally ignoble with their first. They were pursued and harassed the whole way to Elizabethtown by light scouting parties and by the militia and yeomanry of the country, exasperated by the sight of the burning village. Lee, too, came upon their rear-guard with his dragoons; captured a quantity of stores abandoned by them in the hurry of retreat, and made prisoners of several refugees.

It was sunset when the enemy reached Elizabethtown. Dur-

ing the night they passed over to Staten Island by their bridge of boats. By six o'clock in the morning all had crossed, and the bridge had been removed — and the State of New Jersey, so long harassed by the campaignings of either army, was finally evacuated by the enemy. It had proved a school of war to the American troops. The incessant marchings and counter-marchings; the rude encampments; the exposures to all kinds of hardship and privation; the alarms; the stratagems; the rough encounters and adventurous enterprises of which this had been the theatre for the last three or four years, had rendered the patriot soldier hardy, adroit, and long-suffering; had accustomed him to danger, inured him to discipline, and brought him nearly on a level with the European mercenary in the habitudes and usages of arms, while he had the superior incitements of home, country, and independence. The ravaging incursions of the enemy had exasperated the most peace-loving parts of the country; made soldiers of husbandmen, acquainted them with their own powers, and taught them that the foe was vulnerable. The recent ineffectual attempts of a veteran general to penetrate the fastnesses of Morristown, though at the head of a veteran force, “which would once have been deemed capable of sweeping the whole continent before it,” was a lasting theme of triumph to the inhabitants; and it is still the honest boast among the people of Morris County, that “the enemy never were able to get a footing among our hills.” At the same time the conflagration of villages, by which they sought to cover or revenge their repeated failures, and their precipitate retreat, harassed and insulted by half-disciplined militia, and a crude, rustic levy, formed an ignominious close to the British campaign in the Jerseys.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

WASHINGTON APPLIES TO THE STATE LEGISLATURES FOR AID — SUBSCRIPTIONS OF THE LADIES OF PHILADELPHIA — GATES APPOINTED TO COMMAND THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT — FRENCH FLEET ARRIVES AT NEWPORT — PREPARATION FOR A COMBINED MOVEMENT AGAINST NEW YORK — ARNOLD OBTAINS COMMAND AT WEST POINT — GREENE RESIGNS THE OFFICE OF QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

APPREHENSIVE that the next move of the enemy would be up the Hudson, Washington resumed his measures for the security of West Point; moving towards the Highlands in the latter part of June. Circumstances soon convinced him that the enemy had no present intention of attacking that fortress, but merely menaced him at various points, to retard his operations, and oblige him to call out the militia; thereby interrupting agriculture, distressing the country, and rendering his cause unpopular. Having, therefore, caused the military stores in the Jerseys to be removed to more remote and secure places, he countermanded by letter the militia, which were marching to camp from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

He now exerted himself to the utmost to procure from the different State Legislatures, their quotas and supplies for the regular army. "The sparing system," said he, "has been tried until it has brought us to a crisis little less than desperate." This was the time, by one great exertion, to put an end to the war. The basis of every thing was the completion of the Continental battalions to their full establishment; otherwise, nothing decisive could be attempted, and this campaign, like all the former, must be chiefly defensive. He warned against those "indolent and narrow politicians, who, except at the moment of some signal misfortune, are continually crying, *all is well*, and who, to save a little present expense, and avoid some temporary inconvenience, with no ill designs in the main, would protract the war, and risk the perdition of our liberties."<sup>1</sup>

The desired relief, however, had to be effected through the ramifications of general and State governments, and their committees. The operations were tardy and unproductive.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Governor Trumbull. Sparks, vii. 93.

Liberal contributions were made by individuals, a bank was established by the inhabitants of Philadelphia to facilitate the supplies of the army, and an association of ladies of that city raised by subscription between seven and eight thousand dollars, which were put at the disposition of Washington, to be laid out in such a manner as he might think "most honorable and gratifying to the brave old soldiers who had borne so great a share of the burden of the war."

The capture of General Lincoln at Charleston had left the Southern department without a commander-in-chief. As there were likely to be important military operations in that quarter, Washington had intended to recommend General Greene for the appointment. He was an officer on whose abilities, discretion, and disinterested patriotism he had the fullest reliance, and whom he had always found thoroughly disposed to act in unison with him in his general plan of carrying on the war. Congress, however, with unbecoming precipitancy, gave that important command to General Gates (June 13), without waiting to consult Washington's views or wishes.

Gates, at the time, was on his estate in Virginia, and accepted the appointment with avidity, anticipating new triumphs. His old associate, General Lee, gave him an ominous caution at parting. "Beware that your Northern laurels do not change to Southern willows!"

On the 10th of July a French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, arrived at Newport, in Rhode Island. It was composed of seven ships of the line, two frigates and two bombs, and convoyed transports on board of which were upwards of five thousand troops. This was the first division of the forces promised by France, of which Lafayette had spoken. The second division had been detained at Brest for want of transports, but might soon be expected.

The Count de Rochambeau, lieutenant-general of the royal armies, was commander-in-chief of this auxiliary force. He was a veteran, fifty-five years of age, who had early distinguished himself, when colonel of the regiment of Auvergne, and had gained laurels in various battles, especially that of Kloster camp, of which he decided the success. Since then, he had risen from one post of honor to another, until intrusted with his present important command.<sup>1</sup>

Another officer of rank and distinction in this force, was

<sup>1</sup> Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, was born at Vendome, in France, 1725.

Major-General the Marquis de Chastellux, a friend and relative of Lafayette, but much his senior, being now forty-six years of age. He was not only a soldier, but a man of letters, and one familiar with courts as well as camps.

Count Rochambeau's first despatch to Vergennes, the French minister of State (July 16), gave a discouraging picture of affairs. "Upon my arrival here," writes he, "the country was in consternation, the paper money had fallen to sixty for one, and even the government takes it up at forty for one. Washington had for a long time only three thousand men under his command. The arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette, and the announcement of succors from France, afforded some encouragement; but the tories, who are very numerous, gave out that it was only a temporary assistance, like that of Count d'Estaing. In describing to you our reception at this place, we shall show you the feeling of all the inhabitants of the continent. This town is of considerable size, and contains, like the rest, both whigs and tories. I landed with my staff, without troops; nobody appeared in the streets; those at the windows looked sad and depressed. I spoke to the principal persons of the place, and told them, as I wrote to General Washington, that this was merely the advanced guard of a greater force, and that the king was determined to support them with his whole power. In twenty-four hours their spirits rose, and last night all the streets, houses, and steeples were illuminated, in the midst of fire-works, and the greatest rejoicings. I am now here with a single company of grenadiers, until wood and straw shall have been collected; my camp is marked out, and I hope to have the troops landed to-morrow."

Still, however, there appears to have been a lingering feeling of disappointment in the public bosom. "The whigs are pleased," writes de Rochambeau, "but they say that the king ought to have sent twenty thousand men, and twenty ships, to drive the enemy from New York; that the country was infallibly ruined; that it is impossible to find a recruit to send to General Washington's army, without giving him one hundred hard dollars to engage for six months' service, and they beseech his majesty to assist them with all his strength. The war will be an expensive one; we pay even for our quarters, and for the land covered with the camp."<sup>1</sup>

The troops were landed to the east of the town; their en-

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks. Writings of Washington, vii. 504.

campment was on a fine situation, and extended nearly across the island. Much was said of their gallant and martial appearance. There was the noted regiment of Auvergne, in command of which the Count de Rochambeau had first gained his laurels but which was now commanded by his son the viscount, thirty years of age. A legion of six hundred men also was especially admired; it was commanded by the Duke de Lauzun (Lauzun-Biron), who had gained reputation in the preceding year by the capture of Senegal. A feeling of adventure and romance, associated with the American struggle, had caused many of the young nobility to seek this new field of achievement, who, to use De Rochambeau's words, brought out with them the heroic and chivalrous courage of the ancient French nobility. To their credit be it spoken also, they brought with them the ancient French politeness, for it was remarkable how soon they accommodated themselves to circumstances, made light of all the privations and inconveniences of a new country, and conformed to the familiar simplicity of republican manners. General Heath, who, by Washington's orders, was there to offer his services, was, by his own account, "charmed with the officers," who, on their part, he said, expressed the highest satisfaction with the treatment they received.

The instructions of the French ministry to the Count de Rochambeau placed him entirely under the command of General Washington. The French troops were to be considered as auxiliaries, and as such were to take the left of the American troops, and, in all cases of ceremony, to yield them the preference. This considerate arrangement had been adopted at the suggestion of the Marquis de Lafayette, and was intended to prevent the recurrence of those questions of rank and etiquette which had heretofore disturbed the combined service.

Washington, in general orders, congratulated the army on the arrival of this timely and generous succor, which he hailed as a new tie between France and America; anticipating that the only contention between the two armies would be to excel each other in good offices, and in the display of every military virtue. The American cockade had hitherto been black, that of the French was white; he recommended to his officers a cockade of black and white intermingled in compliment to their allies, and as a symbol of friendship and union.

His joy at this important re-enforcement was dashed by the mortifying reflection, that he was still unprovided with the troops and military means requisite for the combined operations

meditated. Still he took upon himself the responsibility of immediate action, and forthwith despatched Lafayette to have an interview with the French commanders, explain the circumstances of the case, and concert plans for the proposed attack upon New York.

"Pressed on all sides by a choice of difficulties," writes he to the President, "I have adopted that line of conduct which suited the dignity and faith of Congress, the reputation of these States, and the honor of our arms. Neither the season nor a regard to decency would permit delay. The die is cast, and it remains with the States to fulfil either their engagements, preserve their credit and support their independence, or to involve us in disgrace and defeat. . . . I shall proceed on the supposition that they will ultimately consult their own interest and honor, and not suffer us to fail for want of means, which it is evidently in their power to afford. What has been done, and is doing, by some of the States, confirms the opinion I have entertained of the sufficient resources of the country. As to the disposition of the people to submit to any arrangements for bringing them forth, I see no reasonable grounds to doubt. If we fail for want of proper exertions, in any of the governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, to my country, and to the world."

The arrival, however, of the British Admiral Graves, at New York, on the 13th of July, with six ships of the line, gave the enemy such a superiority of naval force, that the design on New York was postponed until the second French division should make its appearance, or a squadron under the Count de Guichen, which was expected from the West Indies.

In the mean time, Sir Henry Clinton, who had information of all the plans and movements of the allies, determined to forestall the meditated attack upon New York, by beating up the French quarters on Rhode Island. This he was to do in person at the head of six thousand men, aided by Admiral Arbuthnot with his fleet. Sir Henry accordingly proceeded with his troops to Throg's Neck on the Sound; there to embark on board of transports which Arbuthnot was to provide. No sooner did Washington learn that so large a force had left New York, than he crossed the Hudson to Peekskill, and prepared to move towards King's Bridge, with the main body of his troops, which had recently been re-enforced. His intention was, either to oblige Sir Henry to abandon his project against Rhode Island, or to strike a blow at New York during his

absence. As Washington was on horseback, observing the crossing of the last division of his troops, General Arnold approached, having just arrived in the camp. Arnold had been manœuvring of late to get the command of West Point, and, among other means, had induced Mr. Robert R. Livingston, then a New York member of Congress, to suggest it in a letter to Washington as a measure of great expediency. Arnold now accosted the latter to know whether any place had been assigned to him. He was told, that he was to command the left wing, and Washington added, that they would have further conversation on the subject when he returned to headquarters. The silence and evident chagrin with which the reply was received surprised Washington, and he was still more surprised when he subsequently learned that Arnold was more desirous of a garrison post than of a command in the field, although a post of honor had been assigned him, and active service was anticipated. Arnold's excuse was that his wounded leg still unfitted him for action either on foot or horseback; but that at West Point he might render himself useful.

The expedition of Sir Henry was delayed by the tardy arrival of transports. In the mean time he heard of the sudden move of Washington, and learned, moreover, that the position of the French at Newport had been strengthened by the militia from the neighboring country. These tidings disconcerted his plans. He left Admiral Arbuthnot to proceed with his squadron to Newport, blockade the French fleet, and endeavor to intercept the second division, supposed to be on its way, while he with his troops hastened back to New York.

In consequence of their return Washington again withdrew his forces to the west side of the Hudson; first establishing a post and throwing up small works at Dolbs' Ferry, about ten miles above King's Bridge, to secure a communication across the river for the transportation of troops and ordnance, should the design upon New York be prosecuted.

Arnold now received the important command which he had so earnestly coveted. It included the fortress at West Point and the posts from Fishkill to King's Ferry, together with the corps of infantry and cavalry advanced towards the enemy's line on the east side of the river. He was ordered to have the works at the Point completed as expeditiously as possible, and to keep all his posts on their guard against surprise; there being constant apprehensions that the enemy might make a sudden effort to gain possession of the river.

Having made these arrangements, Washington recrossed to



the west side of the Hudson, and took post at Orangetown or Tappan, on the borders of the Jerseys, and opposite to Dobbs' Ferry, to be at hand for any attempt upon New York.

The execution of this cherished design, however, was again postponed by intelligence that the second division of the French re-enforcements was blockaded in the harbor of Brest by the British: Washington still had hopes that it might be carried into effect by the aid of the squadron of the Count de Guichen from the West Indies; or of a fleet from Cadiz.

At this critical juncture, an embarrassing derangement took place in the quartermaster-general's department, of which General Greene was the head. The reorganization of this department had long been in agitation. A system had been digested by Washington, Schuyler and Greene, adapted, as they thought, to the actual situation of the country. Greene had offered, should it be adopted, to continue in the discharge of the duties of the department, without any extra emolument other than would cover the expenses of his family. Congress devised a different scheme. He considered it incapable of execution, and likely to be attended with calamitous and disgraceful results; he therefore tendered his resignation. Washington endeavored to prevent its being accepted. "Unless effectual measures are taken," said he, "to induce General Greene and the other principal officers of that department to continue their services, there must of necessity be a total stagnation of military business. We not only must cease from the preparations for the campaign, but in all probability shall be obliged to disperse, if not disband the army, for want of subsistence."

The tone and manner, however, assumed by General Greene in offering his resignation, and the time chosen, when the campaign was opened, the enemy in the field, and the French commanders waiting for co-operation, were deeply offensive to Congress. His resignation was promptly accepted: there was a talk even of suspending him from his command in the line.

Washington interposed his sagacious and considerate counsels to allay this irritation, and prevent the infliction of such an indignity upon an officer, for whom he entertained the highest esteem and friendship. "A procedure of this kind, without a proper trial," said he, "must touch the feelings of every officer. It will show in a conspicuous point of view the uncertain tenure by which they hold their commissions. In a word, it will exhibit such a specimen of power, that I question much

if there is an officer in the whole line that will hold a commission beyond the end of the campaign, if he does till then. Such an act in the most despotic government would be attended at least with loud complaints."

The counsels of Washington prevailed; the indignity was not inflicted, and Congress was saved from the error, if not disgrace, of discarding from her service one of the ablest and most meritorious of her generals.

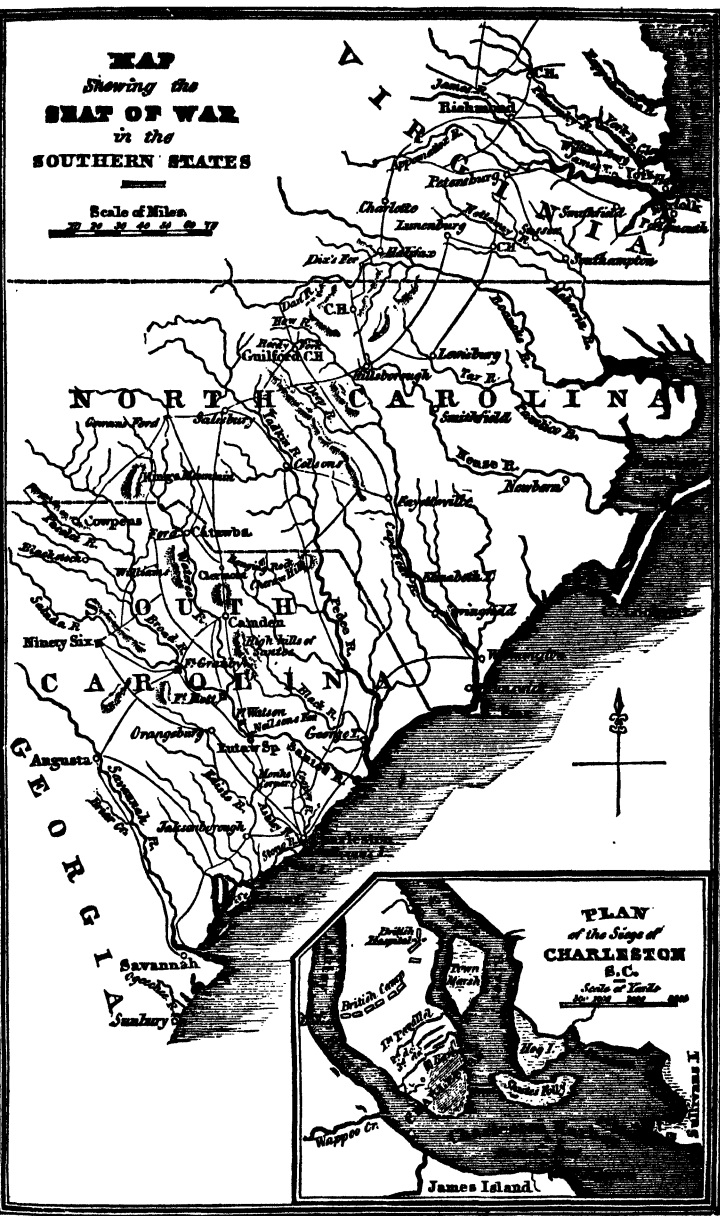
Colonel Pickering was appointed to succeed Greene as quartermaster-general, but the latter continued for some time, at the request of Washington, to aid in conducting the business of the department. Colonel Pickering acquitted himself in his new office with zeal, talents and integrity, but there were radical defects in the system which defied all ability and exertion.

The commissariat was equally in a state of derangement. "At this very juncture," writes Washington (August 20), "I am reduced to the painful alternative, either of dismissing a part of the militia now assembling, or of letting them come forward to starve; which it will be extremely difficult for the troops already in the field to avoid. . . . Every day's experience proves more and more that the present mode of supplies is the most uncertain, expensive and injurious, that could be devised. It is impossible for us to form any calculations of what we are to expect, and, consequently, to concert any plans for future execution. No adequate provision of forage having been made, we are now obliged to subsist the horses of the army by force, which, among other evils, often gives rise to civil disputes, and prosecutions, as vexatious as they are burdensome to the public. "In his emergencies he was forced to empty the magazines at West Point; yet these afforded but temporary relief; scarcity continued to prevail to a distressing degree, and on the 6th of September, he complains that the army has for two or three days been entirely destitute of meat. "Such injury to the discipline of the army," adds he, "and such distress to the inhabitants, result from these frequent events, that my feelings are hurt beyond description at the cries of the one and at seeing the other."

The anxiety of Washington at this moment of embarrassment was heightened by the receipt of disastrous intelligence from the South; the purport of which we shall succinctly relate in another chapter.

**MAP**  
*Showing the*  
**SEAT OF WAR**  
*in the*  
**SOUTHERN STATES**

Scale of Miles  
 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70





## CHAPTER XXVIII.

NORTH CAROLINA — DIFFICULTIES OF ITS INVASION — CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY — SUMTER, HIS CHARACTER AND STORY — ROCKY MOUNT — HANGING ROCK — SLOW ADVANCE OF DE KALB — GATES TAKES COMMAND — DESOLATE MARCH — BATTLE OF CAMDEN — FLIGHT OF GATES — SUMTER SURPRISED BY TARLETON AT THE WAXHAW — WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF MILITIA — HIS LETTER TO GATES.

LORD CORNWALLIS, when left in military command at the South by Sir Henry Clinton, was charged, it will be recollected, with the invasion of North Carolina. It was an enterprise in which much difficulty was to be apprehended, both from the character of the people and the country. The original settlers were from various parts, most of them men who had experienced political or religious oppression, and had brought with them a quick sensibility to wrong, a stern appreciation of their rights, and an indomitable spirit of freedom and independence. In the heart of the State was a hardy Presbyterian stock, the Scotch Irish, as they were called, having emigrated from Scotland to Ireland, and thence to America; and who were said to possess the impulsiveness of the Irishman, with the dogged resolution of the Covenanter.

The early history of the colony abounds with instances of this spirit among its people. "They always behaved insolently to their governors," complains Governor Barrington in 1731; some they have driven out of the country — at other times they set up a government of their own choice, supported by men under arms. It was in fact the spirit of popular liberty and self-government which stirred within them, and gave birth to the glorious axiom: "the rights of the many against the exactions of the few." So ripe was this spirit at an early day, that when the boundary line was run, in 1727, between North Carolina and Virginia, the borderers were eager to be included within the former province, "as there they payed no tribute to God or Cæsar."

It was this spirit which gave rise to the confederacy, called the Regulation, formed to withstand the abuses of power; and the first blood shed in our country, in resistance to arbitrary taxation, was at Alamance in this province, in a conflict between the Regulators and Governor Tryon. Above all, it should

never be forgotten, that at Mecklenburg, in the heart of North Carolina, was fulminated the first declaration of independence of the British crown, upwards of a year before a like declaration by Congress.

A population so characterized presented formidable difficulties to the invader. The physical difficulties arising from the nature of the country consisted in its mountain fastnesses in the north-western part, its vast forests, its sterile tracts, its long rivers, destitute of bridges, and which, though fordable in fair weather, were liable to be swollen by sudden storms and freshets, and rendered deep, turbulent and impassable. These rivers, in fact, which rushed down from the mountain, but wound sluggishly through the plains, were the military strength of the country, as we shall have frequent occasion to show in the course of our narrative.

Lord Cornwallis forbore to attempt the invasion of North Carolina until the summer heats should be over and the harvests gathered in. In the mean time he disposed of his troops in cantonments, to cover the frontiers of South Carolina and Georgia, and maintain their internal quiet. The command of the frontiers was given by him to Lord Rawdon, who made Camden his principal post. This town, the capital of Kershaw District, a fertile, fruitful country, was situated on the east bank of the Wateree River, on the road leading to North Carolina. It was to be the grand military depot for the projected campaign.

Having made these dispositions, Lord Cornwallis set up his head-quarters at Charleston, where he occupied himself in regulating the civil and commercial affairs of the province, in organizing the militia of the lower districts, and in forwarding provisions and munitions of war to Camden.

The proclamation of Sir Henry Clinton, putting an end to all neutrality, and the rigorous penalties and persecutions with which all infractions of its terms were punished, had for a time quelled the spirit of the country. By degrees, however, the dread of British power gave way to impatience of British exactions. Symptoms of revolt manifested themselves in various parts. They were encouraged by intelligence that De Kalb, sent by Washington, was advancing through North Carolina at the head of two thousand men, and that the militia of that State and of Virginia were joining his standard. This was soon followed by tidings that Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne, was on his way to take command of the Southern forces.

The prospect of such aid from the North reanimated the

**Southern patriots.** One of the most eminent of these was Thomas Sumter, whom the Carolinians had surnamed the Game Cock. He was between forty and fifty years of age, brave, hardy, vigorous, resolute. He had served against the Indians in his boyhood, during the old French war, and had been present at the defeat of Braddock. In the present war he had held the rank of lieutenant-colonel of riflemen in the Continental line. After the fall of Charleston, when patriots took refuge in contiguous States, or in the natural fastnesses of the country, he had retired with his family into one of the latter.

The lower part of South Carolina for upwards of a hundred miles back from the sea is a level country, abounding with swamps, locked up in the windings of the rivers which flow down from the Appalachian Mountains. Some of these swamps are mere canebrakes, of little use until subdued by cultivation, when they yield abundant crops of rice. Others are covered with forests of cypress, cedar and laurel, green all the year and odoriferous, but tangled with vines and almost impenetrable. In their bosoms, however, are fine savannahs; natural lawns, open to cultivation, and yielding abundant pasturage. It requires local knowledge, however, to penetrate these wildernesses, and hence they form strongholds to the people of the country. In one of these natural fastnesses, on the borders of the Santee, Sumter had taken up his residence, and hence he would sally forth in various directions. During a temporary absence his retreat had been invaded, his house burnt to the ground, his wife and children driven forth without shelter. Private injury had thus been added to the incentives of patriotism. Emerging from his hiding-place, he had thrown himself among a handful of his fellow-sufferers who had taken refuge in North Carolina. They chose him at once as a leader, and resolved on a desperate struggle for the deliverance of their native State. Destitute of regular weapons, they forged rude substitutes out of the implements of husbandry. Old mill-saws were converted into broadswords; knives at the ends of poles served for lances; while the country housewives gladly gave up their pewter dishes and other utensils, to be melted down and cast into bullets for such as had fire-arms.

When Sumter led this gallant band of exiles over the border, they did not amount in number to two hundred; yet, with these, he attacked and routed a well-armed body of British troops and tories, the terror of the frontier. His followers supplied themselves with weapons from the slain. In a little while his band was augmented by recruits. Parties of militia, also, recently

embodied under the compelling measures of Cornwallis, deserted to the patriot standard. Thus re-enforced to the amount of six hundred men, he made, on the 30th of July, a spirited attack on the British post at Rocky Mount, near the Catawba, but was repulsed. A more successful attack was made by him, eight days afterwards, on another post at Hanging Rock. The Prince of Wales regiment which defended it was nearly annihilated, and a large body of North Carolina loyalists, under Colonel Brian, was routed and dispersed. The gallant exploits of Sumter were emulated in other parts of the country, and the partisan war thus commenced was carried on with an audacity that soon obliged the enemy to call in their outposts, and collect their troops in large masses.

The advance of De Kalb with re-enforcements from the North, had been retarded by various difficulties, the most important of which was want of provisions. This had been especially the case, he said, since his arrival in North Carolina. The legislative or executive power, he complained, gave him no assistance, nor could he obtain supplies from the people but by military force. There was no flour in the camp, nor were dispositions made to furnish any. His troops were reduced for a time to short allowance, and at length, on the 6th of July, brought to a positive halt at Deep River.<sup>1</sup> The North Carolina militia, under General Caswell, were already in the field, on the road to Camden, beyond the Pedee River. He was anxious to form a junction with them, and with some Virginia troops, under Colonel Porterfield, relics of the defenders of Charleston; but a wide and sterile region lay between him and them, difficult to be traversed, unless magazines were established in advance, or he were supplied with provisions to take with him. Thus circumstanced, he wrote to Congress and to the State Legislature, representing his situation, and entreating relief. For three weeks he remained in this encampment, foraging an exhausted country for a meagre subsistence, and was thinking of deviating to the right, and seeking the fertile counties of Mecklenburg and Rowan, when, on the 25th of July, General Gates arrived at the camp.

The baron greeted him with a Continental salute from his little park of artillery, and received him with the ceremony and deference due to a superior officer who was to take the command. There was a contest of politeness between the two generals. Gates approved of De Kalb's standing orders, but at

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<sup>1</sup> A branch of Cape Fear River. The aboriginal name Sapporah.



the first review of the troops, to the great astonishment of the baron, gave orders for them to hold themselves in readiness to march at a *moment's warning*. It was evident he meant to signalize himself by celerity of movement in contrast with protracted delays.

It was in vain the destitute situation of the troops was represented to him, and that they had not a day's provision in advance. His reply was, that wagons laden with supplies were coming on, and would overtake them in two days.

On the 27th, he actually put the army in motion over the Buffalo Ford, on the direct road to Camden. Colonel Williams, the adjutant-general of De Kalb, warned him of the sterile nature of that route, and recommended a more circuitous one further north, which the baron had intended to take, and which passed through the abundant county of Mecklenburg. Gates persisted in taking the direct route, observing that he should the sooner form a junction with Caswell and the North Carolina militia; and as to the sterility of the country, his supplies would soon overtake him.

The route proved all that had been represented. It led through a region of pine barrens, sand hills and swamps, with few human habitations, and those mostly deserted. The supplies of which he had spoken never overtook him. His army had to subsist itself on lean cattle, roaming almost wild in the woods; and to supply the want of bread with green Indian corn, unripe apples, and peaches. The consequence was, a distressing prevalence of dysentery.

Having crossed the Pedee River on the 3d of August, the army was joined by a handful of brave Virginia regulars, under Lieutenant-Colonel Porterfield, who had been wandering about the country since the disaster of Charleston; and, on the 7th, the much-desired junction took place with the North Carolina militia. On the 13th they encamped at Rugeley's Mills, otherwise called Clermont, about twelve miles from Camden, and on the following day were re-enforced by a brigade of seven hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens.

On the approach of Gates, Lord Rawdon had concentrated his forces at Camden. The post was flanked by the Wateree River and Pine-tree Creek, and strengthened with redoubts. Lord Cornwallis had hastened hither from Charleston on learning that affairs in this quarter were drawing to a crisis, and had arrived here on the 13th. The British effective force thus collected was something more than two thousand, including off-

cers. About five hundred were militia and tory refugees from North Carolina.

The forces under Gates, according to the return of his adjutant-general, were three thousand and fifty-two fit for duty; more than two-thirds of them, however, were militia.

On the 14th, he received an express from General Sumter, who, with his partisan corps, after harassing the enemy at various points, was now endeavoring to cut off their supplies from Charleston. The object of the express was to ask a re-enforcement of regulars to aid him in capturing a large convoy of clothing, ammunition and stores, on its way to the garrison, and which would pass Wateree Ferry, about a mile from Camden.

Gates accordingly detached Colonel Woodford of the Maryland line, with one hundred regulars, a party of artillery, and two brass field-pieces. On the same evening he moved with his main force to take post at a deep stream about seven miles from Camden, intending to attack Lord Rawdon or his redoubts should he march out in force to repel Sumter.

It seems hardly credible that Gates should have been so remiss in collecting information concerning the movements of his enemy as to be utterly unaware that Lord Cornwallis had arrived at Camden. Such however, we are assured by his adjutant-general, was the fact.<sup>1</sup>

By a singular coincidence, Lord Cornwallis on the very same evening sallied forth from Camden to attack the American camp at Clermont.

About two o'clock at night, the two forces blundered, as it were, on each other, about half way. A skirmish took place between their advanced guards, in which Porterfield of the Virginia regulars was mortally wounded. Some prisoners were taken on either side. From these the respective commanders learnt the nature of the forces each had stumbled upon. Both halted, formed their troops for action, but deferred further hostilities until daylight.

Gates was astounded at being told that the enemy at hand was Cornwallis with three thousand men. Calling a council of war, he demanded what was best to be done. For a moment or two there was blank silence. It was broken by General Stevens of the Virginia militia, with the significant question, "Gentlemen, is it not too late *now* to do any thing but fight?" No other advice was asked or offered, and all were required

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<sup>1</sup> Narrative of Adjutant-General Williams.

to repair to their respective commands,<sup>1</sup> though General De Kalb, we are told, was of opinion that they should regain their position at Clermont, and there await an attack.

In forming the line, the first Maryland division, including the Delawares, was on the right, commanded by De Kalb. The Virginia militia under Stevens, were on the left. Caswell with the North Carolinians formed the centre. The artillery was in battery on the road. Each flank was covered by a marsh. The second Maryland brigade formed a reserve, a few hundred yards in rear of the first.

At daybreak (August 16), the enemy were dimly descried advancing in column; they appeared to be displaying to the right. The deputy adjutant-general ordered the artillery to open a fire upon them, and then rode to General Gates, who was in the rear of the line, to inform him of the cause of the firing. Gates ordered that Stevens should advance briskly with his brigade of Virginia militia and attack them while in the act of displaying. No sooner did Stevens receive the order than he put his brigade in motion, but discovered that the right wing of the enemy was already in line. A few sharp-shooters were detached to run forward, post themselves behind trees within forty or fifty yards of the enemy to extort their fire while at a distance, and render it less terrible to the militia. The expedient failed. The British rushed on shouting and firing. Stevens called to his men to stand firm, and put them in mind of their bayonets. His words were unheeded. The inexperienced militia, dismayed and confounded by this impetuous assault, threw down their loaded muskets and fled. The panic spread to the North Carolina militia. Part of them made a temporary stand, but soon joined with the rest in flight, rendered headlong and disastrous by the charge and pursuit of Tarleton and his cavalry.

Gates, seconded by his officers, made several attempts to rally the militia, but was borne along with them. The day was hazy; there was no wind to carry off the smoke, which hung over the field of battle like a thick cloud. Nothing could be seen distinctly. Supposing that the regular troops were dispersed like the militia, Gates gave all up for lost, and retreated from the field.

The regulars, however, had not given way. The Maryland brigades and the Delaware regiment, unconscious that they were deserted by the militia, stood their ground, and bore the

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<sup>1</sup> Williams' Narrative.

brunt of the battle. Though repeatedly broken, they as often rallied, and braved even the deadly push of the bayonet. At length a charge of Tarleton's cavalry on their flank threw them into confusion, and drove them into the woods and swamps. None showed more gallantry on this disastrous day than the Baron De Kalb; he fought on foot with the second Maryland brigade, and fell exhausted after receiving eleven wounds. His aide-de-camp, De Buysson, supported him in his arms and was repeatedly wounded in protecting him. He announced the rank and nation of his general, and both were taken prisoners. De Kalb died in the course of a few days, dictating in his last moments a letter expressing his affection for the officers and men of his division who had so nobly stood by him in this deadly strife.

If the militia fled too soon in this battle, said the adjutant-general, the regulars remained too long; fighting when there was no hope of victory.<sup>1</sup>

General Gates in retreating had hoped to rally a sufficient force at Clermont to cover the retreat of the regulars, but the further they fled, the more the militia were dispersed, until the generals were abandoned by all but their aides. To add to the mortification of Gates, he learned in the course of his retreat that Sumter had been completely successful, and having reduced the enemy's redoubt on the Wateree, and captured one hundred prisoners and forty loaded wagons, was marching off with his booty on the opposite side of the river; apprehending danger from the quarter in which he had heard firing in the morning. Gates had no longer any means of co-operating with him; he sent orders to him, therefore, to retire in the best manner he could; while he himself proceeded with General Caswell towards the village of Charlotte, about sixty miles distant.

Cornwallis was apprehensive that Sumter's corps might form a rallying point to the routed army. On the morning of the 17th of August, therefore, he detached Tarleton in pursuit with a body of cavalry and light infantry, about three hundred and fifty strong. Sumter was retreating up the western side of the Wateree, much encumbered by his spoils and prisoners. Tarleton pushed up by forced and concealed marches on the eastern side. Horses and men suffered from the intense heat of the weather. At dusk Tarleton descried the fires of the American camp about a mile from the opposite shore. He gave orders

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<sup>1</sup> Williams' Narrative.

to secure all boats on the river, and to light no fire in the camp. In the morning his sentries gave word that the Americans were quitting their encampment. It was evident they knew nothing of a British force being in pursuit of them. Tarleton now crossed the Wateree; the infantry with a three-pounder passed in boats; the cavalry swam their horses where the river was not fordable. The delay in crossing, and the diligence of Sumter's march, increased the distance between the pursuers and the pursued. About noon a part of Tarleton's force gave out through heat and fatigue. Leaving them to repose on the bank of Fishing Creek, he pushed on with about one hundred dragoons, the freshest and most able; still marching with great circumspection. As he entered a valley, a discharge of small-arms from a thicket tumbled a dragoon from his saddle. His comrades galloped up to the place, and found two American videttes whom they sabred before Tarleton could interpose. A sergeant and five dragoons rode up to the summit of a neighboring hill to reconnoitre. Crouching on their horses they made signs to Tarleton. He cautiously approached the crest of the hill, and looking over beheld the American camp on a neighboring height, and apparently in a most negligent condition.

Sumter, in fact, having pressed his retreat to the neighborhood of the Catawba Ford, and taken a strong position at the mouth of Fishing Creek, and his patrols having scoured the road without discovering any signs of an enemy, considered himself secure from surprise. The two shots fired by his videttes had been heard, but were supposed to have been made by militia shooting cattle. The troops having for the last four days been almost without food or sleep, were now indulged in complete relaxation. Their arms were stacked, and they were scattered about, some strolling, some lying on the grass under the trees, some bathing in the river. Sumter himself had thrown off part of his clothes on account of the heat of the weather.

Having well reconnoitred this negligent camp, indulging in summer supineness and sultry repose, Tarleton prepared for instant attack. His cavalry and infantry formed into one line, dashed forward with a general shout, and, before the Americans could recover from their surprise, got between them and the parade ground on which the muskets were stacked.

All was confusion and consternation in the American camp. Some opposition was made from behind baggage wagons, and there was skirmishing in various quarters, but in a little while there was a universal flight to the river and the woods. Be-

tween three and four hundred were killed and wounded; all their arms and baggage with two brass field-pieces fell into the hands of the enemy, who also recaptured the prisoners and booty taken at Camden. Sumter with about three hundred and fifty of his men effected a retreat; he galloped off, it is said, without saddle, hat or coat.

Gates, on reaching the village of Charlotte, had been joined by some fugitives from his army. He continued on to Hillsborough, one hundred and eighty miles from Camden, where he made a stand and endeavored to rally his scattered forces. His regular troops, however, were little more than one thousand. As to the militia of North and South Carolina, they had dispersed to their respective homes, depending upon the patriotism and charity of the farmers along the road for food and shelter.

It was not until the beginning of September that Washington received word of the disastrous reverse at Camden. The shock was the greater, as previous reports from that quarter had represented the operations a few days preceding the action as much in our favor. It was evident to Washington that the course of war must ultimately tend to the Southern States, yet the situation of affairs in the North did not permit him to detach any sufficient force for their relief. All that he could do for the present was to endeavor to hold the enemy in check in that quarter. For this purpose, he gave orders that some regular troops, enlisted in Maryland for the war, and intended for the main army, should be sent to the southward. He wrote to Governor Rutledge of South Carolina (12th September), to raise a permanent, compact, well-organized body of troops, instead of depending upon a numerous army of militia, always "inconceivably expensive, and too fluctuating and undisciplined" to oppose a regular force. He was still more urgent and explicit on this head in his letters to the President of Congress (September 15). "Regular troops alone," said he, "are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defence as offence; and whenever a substitute is attempted, it must prove illusory and ruinous. No militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet been witness to a single instance, that can justify a different opinion; and it is most earnestly to be wished, that the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in any material degree, to so precarious a dependence. . . . In my ideas of the true system of war at the southward, the object ought to be to have a good army, rather

than a large one. Every exertion should be made by North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, to raise a permanent force of six thousand men, exclusive of horse and artillery. These, with the occasional aid of the militia in the vicinity of the scene of action, will not only suffice to prevent the further progress of the enemy, but, if properly supplied, to oblige them to compact their force and relinquish a part of what they now hold. To expel them from the country entirely is what we cannot aim at, till we derive more effectual support from abroad; and by attempting too much, instead of going forward, we shall go backward. Could such a force be once set on foot, it would immediately make an inconceivable change in the face of affairs not only in the opposition to the enemy, but in expense, consumption of provisions, and waste of arms and stores. No magazines can be equal to the demands of an army of militia, and none need economy more than ours."

He had scarce written the foregoing, when he received a letter from the now unfortunate Gates, dated at Hillsborough, August 30 and September 3, giving particulars of his discomfiture. No longer vaunting and vainglorious, he pleads nothing but his patriotism, and deprecates the fall which he apprehends awaits him. The appeal which he makes to Washington's magnanimity to support him in this day of his reverse, is the highest testimonial he could give to the exalted character of the man whom he once affected to underrate, and aspired to supplant.

"Anxious for the public good," said he, "I shall continue my unwearied endeavors to stop the progress of the enemy, reinstate our affairs, recommence an offensive war, and recover all our losses in the Southern States. But if being unfortunate is solely a reason sufficient for removing me from command, I shall most cheerfully submit to the orders of Congress, and resign an office which few generals would be anxious to possess, and where the utmost skill and fortitude are subject to be baffled by difficulties, which must for a time surround the chief in command here. That your Excellency may meet with no such difficulties, that your road to fame and fortune may be smooth and easy is the sincere wish of your most humble servant."

Again: "If I can yet render good service to the United States, it will be necessary it should be seen that I have the support of Congress, and of your Excellency; otherwise, some men may think they please my superiors by blaming me, and thus recommend themselves to favor. But you, sir, will be too

generous to lend an ear to such men, if such there be, and will show your greatness of soul rather by protecting than slighting the unfortunate."

Washington in his reply, while he acknowledged the shock and surprise caused by the first account of the unexpected event, did credit to the behavior of the Continental troops. "The accounts," added he, "which the enemy give of the action, show that their victory was dearly bought. Under present circumstances, the system which you are pursuing seems to be extremely proper. It would add no good purpose to take a position near the enemy while you are so far inferior in force. If they can be kept in check by the light irregular troops under Colonel Sumter and other active officers, they will gain nothing by the time which must be necessarily spent by you in collecting and arranging the new army, forming magazines, and replacing the stores which were lost in the action."

Washington still cherished the idea of a combined attack upon New York as soon as a French naval force should arrive. The destruction of the enemy here would relieve this part of the Union from an internal war, and enable its troops and resources to be united with those of France in vigorous efforts against the common enemy elsewhere. Hearing, therefore, that the Count de Guichen, with his West India squadron, was approaching the coast, Washington prepared to proceed to Hartford in Connecticut, there to hold a conference with the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, and concert a plan for future operations, of which the attack on New York was to form the principal feature.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

TREASON OF ARNOLD — HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE ENEMY  
— HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH ANDRÉ — PARTING SCENE WITH  
WASHINGTON — MIDNIGHT CONFERENCE ON THE BANKS OF THE  
HUDSON — RETURN OF ANDRÉ BY LAND — CIRCUMSTANCES OF  
HIS CAPTURE.

WE have now to enter upon a sad episode of our revolutionary history — the treason of Arnold. Of the military skill, daring enterprise, and indomitable courage of this man — ample evidence has been given in the foregoing pages. Of the



implicit confidence reposed in his patriotism by Washington, sufficient proof is manifested in the command with which he was actually intrusted. But Arnold was false at heart, and, at the very time of seeking that command, had been for many months in traitorous correspondence with the enemy.

The first idea of proving recreant to the cause he had vindicated so bravely, appears to have entered his mind when the charges preferred against him by the council of Pennsylvania were referred by Congress to a court-martial. Before that time he had been incensed against Pennsylvania; but now his wrath was excited against his country, which appeared so insensible to his services. Disappointment in regard to the settlement of his accounts, added to his irritation, and mingled sordid motives with his resentment; and he began to think how, while he wreaked his vengeance on his country, he might do it with advantage to his fortunes. With this view he commenced a correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in a disguised handwriting, and, under the signature of *Gustavus*, representing himself as a person of importance in the American service, who, being dissatisfied with the late proceedings of Congress, particularly the alliance with France, was desirous of joining the cause of Great Britain, could he be certain of personal security, and indemnification for whatever loss of property he might sustain. His letters occasionally communicated articles of intelligence of some moment which proved to be true, and induced Sir Henry to keep up the correspondence; which was conducted on his part by his aide-de-camp, Major John André, likewise in a disguised hand, and under the signature of John Anderson.

Months elapsed before Sir Henry discovered who was his secret correspondent. Even after discovering it he did not see fit to hold out any very strong inducements to Arnold for desertion. The latter was out of command, and had nothing to offer but his services; which in his actual situation were scarcely worth buying.

In the mean time the circumstances of Arnold were daily becoming more desperate. Debts were accumulating, and creditors becoming more and more importunate, as his means to satisfy them decreased. The public reprimand he had received was rankling in his mind, and filling his heart with bitterness. Still he hesitated on the brink of absolute infamy, and attempted a half-way leap. Such was his proposition to M. de Luzerne to make himself subservient to the policy of the French government, on condition of receiving a loan equal

to the amount of his debts. This he might have reconciled to his conscience by the idea that France was an ally, and its policy likely to be friendly. It was his last card before resorting to utter treachery. Failing in it, his desperate alternative was to get some important command, the betrayal of which to the enemy might obtain for him a munificent reward.

He may possibly have had such an idea in his mind some time previously, when he sought the command of a naval and military expedition, which failed to be carried into effect; but such certainly was the secret of his eagerness to obtain the command of West Point, the great object of British and American solicitude, on the possession of which were supposed by many to hinge the fortunes of the war.

He took command of the post and its dependencies about the beginning of August, fixing his head-quarters at Beverley, a country-seat a little below West Point, on the opposite or eastern side of the river. It stood in a lonely part of the Highlands high up from the river, yet at the foot of a mountain covered with woods. It was commonly called the Robinson House, having formerly belonged to Washington's early friend Colonel Beverley Robinson, who had obtained a large part of the Phillipse estate in this neighborhood, by marrying one of the heiresses. Colonel Robinson was a royalist; had entered into the British service, and was now residing in New York, and Beverley with its surrounding lands had been confiscated.

From this place Arnold carried on a secret correspondence with Major André. Their letters, still in disguised hands, and under the names of Gustavus and John Anderson, purported to treat merely of commercial operations, but the real matter in negotiation was the betrayal of West Point and the Highlands to Sir Henry Clinton. This stupendous piece of treachery was to be consummated at the time when Washington, with the main body of his army, would be drawn towards King's Bridge, and the French troops landed on Long Island in the projected co-operation against New York. At such time, a flotilla under Rodney, having on board a large land force, was to ascend the Hudson to the Highlands, which would be surrendered by Arnold almost without opposition, under pretext of insufficient force to make resistance. The immediate result of this surrender, it was anticipated, would be the defeat of the combined attempt upon New York; and its ultimate effect might be the dismemberment of the Union and the dislocation of the whole American scheme of warfare.

We have before had occasion to mention Major André, but

the part which he took in this dark transaction, and the degree of romantic interest subsequently thrown around his memory, call for a more specific notice of him. He was born in London, in 1751, but his parents were of Geneva in Switzerland, where he was educated. Being intended for mercantile life, he entered a London counting-house, but had scarce attained his eighteenth year when he formed a romantic attachment to a beautiful girl, Miss Honora Sneyd, by whom his passion was returned, and they became engaged. This sadly unfitted him for the sober routine of the counting-house. "All my mercantile calculations," writes he in one of his boyish letters, "go to the tune of dear Honora."

The father of the young lady interfered, and the premature match was broken off. André abandoned the counting-house and entered the army. His first commission was dated March 4, 1771; but he subsequently visited Germany, and returned to England in 1773, still haunted by his early passion. His lady love, in the mean time, had been wooed by other admirers, and in the present year became the second wife of Richard Lovel Edgeworth, a young widower of twenty-six.<sup>1</sup>

André came to America in 1774, as lieutenant of the Royal English Fusileers; and was among the officers captured at St. John's, early in the war, by Montgomery. He still bore about with him a memento of his boyish passion, the "dear talisman," as he called it, a miniature of Miss Sneyd painted by himself in 1769. In a letter to a friend, soon after his capture, he writes, "I have been taken prisoner by the Americans, and stripped of every thing except the picture of Honora, which I concealed in my mouth. Preserving that, I yet think myself fortunate."

His temper, however, appears to have been naturally light and festive; and if he still cherished this "tender remembrance," it was but as one of those documents of early poetry and romance, which serve to keep the heart warm and tender among the gay and cold realities of life. What served to favor the idea was a little song which he had composed when in Philadelphia, commencing with the lines,

"Return enraptured hours  
When Delia's heart was mine;"

and which was supposed to breathe the remembrance of his early and ill-requited passion.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Father, by his first marriage, of the celebrated Maria Edgeworth.

<sup>2</sup> Composed at the request of Miss Rebecca Redman.

His varied and graceful talents, and his engaging manners, rendered him generally popular; while his devoted and somewhat subservient loyalty recommended him to the favor of his commander, and obtained him, without any distinguished military services, the appointment of adjutant-general with the rank of major. He was a prime promoter of elegant amusement in camp and garrison; manager, actor, and scene painter in those amateur theatricals in which the British officers delighted. He was one of the principal devisers of the Mischianza in Philadelphia, in which semi-effeminate pageant he had figured as one of the knights champions of beauty; Miss Shippen, afterwards Mrs. Arnold, being the lady whose peerless charms he undertook to vindicate. He held, moreover, a facile, and at times, satirical pen, and occasionally amused himself with caricaturing in rhyme the appearance and exploits of the "rebel officers."

André had already employed that pen in a furtive manner, after the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British; having carried on a correspondence with the leaders of a body of loyalists near the waters of the Chesapeake, who were conspiring to restore the royal government.<sup>1</sup> In the present instance he had engaged, nothing loth, in a service of intrigue and manœuvre, which, however sanctioned by military usage, should hardly have invited the zeal of a high-minded man. We say manœuvre, because he appears to have availed himself of his former intimacy with Mrs. Arnold, to make her an unconscious means of facilitating a correspondence with her husband. Some have inculpated her in the guilt of the transaction, but, we think, unjustly. It has been alleged that a correspondence had been going on between her and André previous to her marriage, and was kept up after it; but as far as we can learn, only one letter passed between them, written by André in August 16, 1779, in which he solicits her remembrance, assures her that respect for her and the fair circle in which he had become acquainted with her, remains unimpaired by distance or political broils, reminds her that the Mischianza had made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her with supplies in that department. "I shall be glad," adds he sportively, "to enter into the whole detail of cap wire, needles, gauze, etc., and to the best of my abilities render you, in these trifles, services from which I hope you would infer a zeal to be further employed." The apparent

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<sup>1</sup> Simcoe's Military Journal, p. 153, 4.

object of this letter was to open a convenient medium of communication, which Arnold might use without exciting her suspicion.

Various circumstances connected with this nefarious negotiation, argue lightness of mind and something of debasing alloy on the part of André. The correspondence carried on for months in the jargon of traffic, savored less of the camp than the counting-house; the protracted tampering with a brave but necessitous man for the sacrifice of his fame and the betrayal of his trust, strikes us as being beneath the range of a truly chivalrous nature.

Correspondence had now done its part in the business; for the completion of the plan and the adjustment of the traitor's recompense, a personal meeting was necessary between Arnold and André. The former proposed it should take place at his own quarters at the Robinson House, where André should come in disguise, as a bearer of intelligence, and under the feigned name of John Anderson. André positively objected to entering the American lines; it was arranged, therefore, that the meeting should take place on neutral ground, near the American outpost, at Dobbs' Ferry, on the 11th of September, at 12 o'clock. André attended at the appointed place and time, accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson, who was acquainted with the plot. An application of the latter for the restoration of his confiscated property in the Highlands, seemed to have been used occasionally as a blind in these proceedings.

Arnold had passed the preceding night at what was called the White House, the residence of Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, situated on the west side of the Hudson, in Haverstraw Bay, about two miles below Stony Point. He set off thence in his barge for the place of rendezvous; but, not being protected by a flag, was fired upon and pursued by the British guard-boats, stationed near Dobbs' Ferry. He took refuge at an American post on the western shore, whence he returned in the night to his quarters in the Robinson House. Lest his expedition should cause some surmise, he pretended, in a note to Washington, that he had been down the Hudson to arrange signals in case of any movement of the enemy upon the river.

New arrangements were made for an interview, but it was postponed until after Washington should depart for Hartford, to hold the proposed conference with Count Rochambeau and the French officers. In the mean time, the British sloop-of-war, *Vulture*, anchored a few miles below Teller's Point, to be at hand in aid of the negotiation. On board was Colonel Rob-

inson, who, pretending to believe that General Putnam still commanded in the Highlands, addressed a note to him requesting an interview on the subject of his confiscated property. This letter he sent by flag, enclosed in one addressed to Arnold; soliciting of him the same boon should General Putnam be absent.

On the 18th September, Washington with his suite crossed the Hudson to Verplanck's Point, in Arnold's barge, on his way to Hartford. Arnold accompanied him as far as Peekskill, and on the way, laid before him with affected frankness, the letter of Colonel Robinson, and asked his advice. Washington disapproved of any such interview, observing, that the civil authorities alone had cognizance of these questions of confiscated property.

Arnold now openly sent a flag on board of the Vulture, as if bearing a reply to the letter he had communicated to the commander-in-chief. By this occasion he informed Colonel Robinson, that a person with a boat and flag would be alongside of the Vulture, on the night of the 20th; and that any matter he might wish to communicate, would be laid before General Washington on the following Saturday, when he might be expected back from Newport.

On the faith of the information thus covertly conveyed, André proceeded up the Hudson on the 20th, and went on board of the Vulture, where he found Colonel Robinson, and expected to meet Arnold. The latter, however, had made other arrangements, probably with a view to his personal security. About half-past eleven, of a still and starlight night (the 21st), a boat was descried from on board, gliding silently along, rowed by two men with muffled oars. She was hailed by an officer on watch, and called to account. A man, seated in the stern, gave out that they were from King's Ferry, bound to Dobbs' Ferry. He was ordered alongside, and soon made his way on board. He proved to be Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, already mentioned, whom Arnold had prevailed upon to go on board of the Vulture, and bring a person on shore who was coming from New York with important intelligence. He had given him passes to protect him and those with him, in case he should be stopped, either in going or returning, by an American water-guard, which patrolled the river in whale-boats. He had made him the bearer of a letter addressed to Colonel Beverley Robinson, which was to the following purport: "This will be delivered to you by Mr. Smith, who will conduct you to a place of safety. Neither Mr. Smith nor any

other person shall be made acquainted with your proposals ; if they (which I doubt not) are of such a nature, that I can officially take notice of them, I shall do it with pleasure. I take it for granted Colonel Robinson will not propose any thing that is not for the interest of the United States as well as of himself." All this use of Colonel Robinson's name was intended as a blind, should the letter be intercepted.

Robinson introduced André to Smith by the name of John Anderson, who was to go on shore in his place (he being unwell), to have an interview with General Arnold. André wore a blue great coat which covered his uniform, and Smith always declared that at the time he was totally ignorant of his name and military character. Robinson considered this whole nocturnal proceeding full of peril, and would have dissuaded André, but the latter was zealous in executing his mission, and, embarking in the boat with Smith, was silently rowed to the western side of the river, about six miles below Stony Point. Here they landed a little after midnight, at the foot of a shadowy mountain called the Long Clove ; a solitary place, the haunt of the owl and the whippoorwill, and well fitted for a treasonable conference.

Arnold was in waiting, but standing aloof among thickets. He had come hither on horseback from Smith's house, about three or four miles distant, attended by one of Smith's servants, likewise mounted. The midnight negotiation between André and Arnold was carried on in darkness among the trees. Smith remained in the boat, and the servant drew off to a distance with the horses. One hour after another passed away, when Smith approached the place of conference, and gave warning that it was near daybreak, and if they lingered much longer the boat would be discovered.

The nefarious bargain was not yet completed, and Arnold feared the sight of a boat going to the Vulture might cause suspicion. He prevailed therefore upon André to remain on shore until the following night. The boat was accordingly sent to a creek higher up the river, and André, mounting the servant's horse, set off with Arnold for Smith's house. The road passed through the village of Haverstraw. As they rode along in the dark, the voice of a sentinel demanding the countersign startled André with the fearful conviction that he was within the American lines, but it was too late to recede. It was daybreak when they arrived at Smith's house.

They had scarcely entered when the booming of cannon was heard from down the river. It gave André uneasiness, and

with reason. Colonel Livingston, who commanded above at Verplanck's Point, learning that the Vulture lay within shot of Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, had sent a party with cannon to that point in the night, and they were now firing upon the sloop-of-war. André watched the cannonade with an anxious eye from an upper window of Smith's house. At one time he thought the Vulture was on fire. He was relieved from painful solicitude when he saw the vessel weigh anchor, and drop down the river out of reach of cannon shot.

After breakfast, the plot for the betrayal of West Point and its dependent posts was adjusted, and the sum agreed upon that Arnold was to receive, should it be successful. André was furnished with plans of the works, and explanatory papers, which, at Arnold's request, he placed between his stockings and his feet; promising, in case of accident, to destroy them.

All matters being thus arranged, Arnold prepared to return in his own barge to his head-quarters at the Robinson House. As the Vulture had shifted her ground, he suggested to André a return to New York by land, as most safe and expeditious; the latter, however, insisted upon being put on board of the sloop-of-war, on the ensuing night. Arnold consented; but, before his departure, to provide against the possible necessity of a return by land, he gave André the following pass, dated from the Robinson House:

“Permit Mr. John Anderson to pass the guards to the White Plains, or below, if he chooses; he being on public business by my direction.

“B. ARNOLD, *M. Genl.*”

Smith also, who was to accompany him, was furnished with passports to proceed either by water or by land.

Arnold departed about ten o'clock. André passed a lonely day, casting many a wistful look toward the Vulture. Once on board of that ship he would be safe; he would have fulfilled his mission; the capture of West Point would be certain, and his triumph would be complete. As evening approached he grew impatient, and spoke to Smith about departure. To his surprise, he found the latter had made no preparation for it; he had discharged his boatmen, who had gone home: in short, he refused to take him on board of the Vulture. The cannonade of the morning had probably made him fear for his personal safety, should he attempt to go on board, the Vulture



having resumed her exposed position. He offered, however, to cross the river with André at King's Ferry, put him in the way of returning to New York by land, and accompany him some distance on horseback.

André was in an agony at finding himself, notwithstanding all his stipulations, forced within the American lines; but there seemed to be no alternative, and he prepared for the hazardous journey.

He wore, as we have noted, a military coat under a long blue surtout; he was now persuaded to lay it aside, and put on a citizen's coat of Smith's; thus adding disguise to the other humiliating and hazardous circumstances of the case.

It was about sunset when André and Smith, attended by a negro servant of the latter, crossed from King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point. After proceeding about eight miles on the road towards White Plains, they were stopped between eight and nine o'clock, near Crompond, by a patrolling party. The captain of it was uncommonly inquisitive and suspicious. The passports with Arnold's signature satisfied him. He warned them, however, against the danger of proceeding further in the night. Cow Boys from the British lines were scouring the country, and had recently marauded the neighborhood. Smith's fears were again excited, and André was obliged to yield to them. A bed was furnished them in a neighboring house, where André passed an anxious and restless night, under the very eye, as it were, of an American patrol.

At daybreak he awoke Smith, and hurried their departure, and his mind was lightened of a load of care, when he found himself out of the reach of the patrol and its inquisitive commander.

They were now approaching that noted part of the country, heretofore mentioned as the Neutral Ground, extending north and south about thirty miles, between the British and American lines. A beautiful region of forest-clad hills, fertile valleys, and abundant streams, but now almost desolated by the scourings of Skinners and Cow Boys: the former professing allegiance to the American cause, the latter to the British, but both arrant marauders.

One who had resided at the time in this region, gives a sad picture of its state. Houses plundered and dismantled; enclosures broken down; cattle carried away; fields lying waste; the roads grass-grown; the country mournful, solitary, silent—reminding one of the desolation presented in the song of Deborah. “In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the

days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked in by-paths. The inhabitants of the villages ceased; they ceased in Israel."<sup>1</sup>

About two and a half miles from Pine's Bridge, on the Croton River, André and his companion partook of a scanty meal at a farm-house which had recently been harried by the Cow Boys. Here they parted, Smith to return home, André to pursue his journey alone to New York. His spirits, however, were cheerful; for, having got beyond the patrols, he considered the most perilous part of his route accomplished.

About six miles beyond Pine's Bridge he came to a place where the road forked, the left branch leading towards White Plains in the interior of the country, the right inclining towards the Hudson. He had originally intended to take the left hand road, the other being said to be infested by Cow Boys. These, however, were not to be apprehended by him, as they belonged to the lower party or British; it led, too, more directly to New York; so he turned down it, and took his course along the river road.

He had not proceeded far, when coming to a place where a small stream crossed the road and ran into a woody dell, a man stepped out from the trees, levelled a musket and brought him to a stand, while two other men similarly armed, showed themselves prepared to second their comrade.

The man who had first stepped out wore a refugee uniform.

At sight of it, André's heart leapt, and he felt himself secure. Losing all caution, he exclaimed eagerly: "Gentlemen, I hope you belong to our party?" — "What party?" was asked. — "The lower party," said André. — "We do," was the reply. All reserve was now at an end. André declared himself to be a British officer; that he had been up the country on particular business, and must not be detained a single moment. He drew out his watch as he spoke. It was a gold one, and served to prove to them that he was what he represented himself, gold watches being seldom worn in those days, excepting by persons of consequence.

To his consternation, the supposed refugee now avowed himself and his companions to be Americans, and told André he was their prisoner!

It was even so. The sacking and burning of Young's House, and the carrying of its rustic defenders into captivity, had roused the spirit of the Neutral Ground. The yeomanry of

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<sup>1</sup> See Dwight's Travels, vol. iii.

that harassed country had turned out in parties to intercept freebooters from the British lines, who had recently been on the maraud, and might be returning to the city with their spoils. One of these parties, composed of seven men of the neighborhood, had divided itself. Four took post on a hill above Sleepy Hollow, to watch the road which crossed the country; the other three, John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams by name, stationed themselves on the road which runs parallel to the Hudson. Two of them were seated on the grass playing at cards to pass away the time, while one mounted guard.

The one in refugee garb who brought André to a stand, was John Paulding, a stout-hearted youngster, who, like most of the young men of this outraged neighborhood, had been repeatedly in arms to repel or resent aggressions, and now belonged to the militia. He had twice been captured and confined in the loathsome military prisons, where patriots suffered in New York, first in the North Dutch Church, and last in the noted Sugar House. Both times he had made his escape; the last time, only four days previous to the event of which we are treating. The ragged refugee coat, which had deceived André, and been the cause of his betraying himself, had been given to Paulding by one of his captors, in exchange for a good yeoman garment of which they stripped him.<sup>1</sup> This slight circumstance may have produced the whole discovery of the treason.

André was astounded at finding into what hands he had fallen; and how he had betrayed himself by his heedless avowal. Promptly, however, recovering his self-possession, he endeavored to pass off his previous account of himself as a mere subterfuge. "A man must do any thing," said he laughingly, "to get along." He now declared himself to be a Continental officer, going down to Dobbs' Ferry to get information from below; so saying, he drew forth and showed them the pass of General Arnold.

This, in the first instance, would have been sufficient; but his unwary tongue had ruined him. The suspicions of his captors were completely roused. Seizing the bridle of his horse, they ordered him to dismount. He warned them that he was on urgent business for the general, and that they would get themselves into trouble should they detain him. "We care not for that," was the reply, as they led him among the thickets, on the border of the brook.

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<sup>1</sup> Stated on the authority of Commodore Hiram Paulding, a son of the captor, who heard it repeatedly from the lips of his father.

Paulding asked whether he had any letters about him. He answered, no. They proceeded to search him. A minute description is given of his dress. He wore a round hat, a blue surtout, a crimson close-bodied coat, somewhat faded: the button-holes worked with gold, and the buttons covered with gold lace, a nankeen vest, and small-clothes and boots.

They obliged him to take off his coat and vest, and found on him eighty dollars in Continental money, but nothing to warrant suspicion of any thing sinister, and were disposed to let him proceed, when Paulding exclaimed: "Boys, I am not satisfied — his boots must come off."

At this André changed color. His boots, he said, came off with difficulty, and he begged he might not be subjected to the inconvenience and delay. His remonstrances were in vain. He was obliged to sit down: his boots drawn off, and the concealed papers discovered. Hastily scanning them, Paulding exclaimed, "My God! He is a spy!"

He demanded of André where he had gotten these papers.

"Of a man at Pine's Bridge, a stranger to me," was the reply.

While dressing himself, André endeavored to ransom himself from his captors; rising from one offer to another. He would give any sum of money if they would let him go. He would give his horse, saddle, bridle, and one hundred guineas, and would send them to any place that might be fixed upon.

Williams asked him if he would not give more.

He replied, that he would give any reward they might name either in goods or money, and would remain with two of their party while one went to New York to get it.

Here Paulding broke in and declared with an oath, that if he would give ten thousand guineas, he should not stir one step.<sup>1</sup>

The unfortunate André now submitted to his fate, and the captors set off with their prisoner for North Castle, the nearest American post, distant ten or twelve miles. They proceeded across a hilly and woody region, part of the way by the road, part across fields. One strode in front, occasionally holding the horse by the bridle, the others walked on either side. André rode on in silence, declining to answer further questions until he should come before a military officer. About noon, they halted at a farm-house where the inhabitants were taking their mid-day repast. The worthy housewife, moved by

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<sup>1</sup> Testimony of David Williams.

André's prepossessing appearance and dejected air, kindly invited him to partake. He declined, alleging that he had no appetite. Glancing at his gold-laced crimson coat, the good dame apologized for her rustic fare. "O, madam," exclaimed poor André with a melancholy shake of the head, "it is all very good — but, indeed, I cannot eat!"

This was related to us by a venerable matron, who was present on the occasion, a young girl at the time, but who in her old days could not recall the scene and the appearance of André without tears.

The captors with their prisoner being arrived at North Castle, Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson, who was in command there, recognized the handwriting of Arnold in the papers found upon André, and, perceiving that they were of a dangerous nature, sent them off by express to General Washington, at Hartford.

André, still adhering to his assumed name, begged that the commander at West Point might be informed that John Anderson, though bearing his passport, was detained.

Jameson appears completely to have lost his head on the occasion. He wrote to Arnold, stating the circumstances of the arrest, and that the papers found upon the prisoner had been despatched by express to the commander-in-chief, and at the same time, he sent the prisoner himself, under a strong guard, to accompany the letter.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Major Tallmadge, next in command to Jameson, but of a much clearer head, arrived at North Castle, having been absent on duty to White Plains. When the circumstances of the case were related to him, he at once suspected treachery on the part of Arnold. At his earnest entreaties, an express was sent after the officer who had André in charge, ordering him to bring the latter back to North Castle; but by singular perversity or obtuseness in judgment, Jameson neglected to countermand the letter which he had written to Arnold.

When André was brought back, and was pacing up and down the room, Tallmadge saw at once by his air and movements, and the mode of turning on his heel, that he was a military man. By his advice, and under his escort, the prisoner was conducted to Colonel Sheldon's post at Lower Salem, as more secure than North Castle.

Here André, being told that the papers found upon his person

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks' Arnold. We would note generally, that we are indebted to Mr. Sparks' work for many particulars given by us of this tale of treason.

had been forwarded to Washington, addressed to him immediately the following lines :

"I beg your Excellency will be persuaded that no alteration in the temper of my mind or apprehensions for my safety, induces me to take the step of addressing you ; but that it is to secure myself from the imputation of having assumed a mean character for treacherous purposes or self-interest. . . . It is to vindicate my fame that I speak, and not to solicit security.

"The person in your possession is Major John André, adjutant-general of the British army.

"The influence of one commander in the army of his adversary is an advantage taken in war. A correspondence for this purpose I held ; as confidential (in the present instance) with his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton. To favor it, I agreed to meet upon ground not within the posts of either army, a person who was to give me intelligence. I came up in the Vulture man-of-war for this effect, and was fetched from the shore to the beach. Being there, I was told that the approach of day would prevent my return, and that I must be concealed until the next night. I was in my regimentals, and had fairly risked my person.

"Against my stipulation, my intention, and without my knowledge beforehand, I was conducted within one of your posts. Thus was I betrayed into the vile condition of an enemy within your posts.

"Having avowed myself a British officer, I have nothing to reveal but what relates to myself, which is true, on the honor of an officer and a gentleman.

"The request I have made to your Excellency, and I am conscious that I address myself well, is, that in any rigor policy may dictate, a decency of conduct towards me may mark, that though unfortunate, I am branded with nothing dishonorable ; as no motive could be mine, but the service of my king, and as I was involuntarily an impostor."

This letter he submitted to the perusal of Major Tallmadge, who was surprised and agitated at finding the rank and importance of the prisoner he had in charge. The letter being despatched, and André's pride relieved on a sensitive point, he resumed his serenity, apparently unconscious of the awful responsibility of his situation. Having a talent for caricature, he even amused himself in the course of the day by making a ludicrous sketch of himself and his rustic escort under march, and presenting it to an officer in the room with him. "This,"

said he gayly, "will give you an idea of the style in which I have had the honor to be conducted to my present abode."

NOTE. — André's propensity for caricature had recently been indulged in a mock heroic poem in three cantos, celebrating an attack upon a British picket by Wayne, with the driving into the American camp of a drove of cattle by Lee's dragoons. It is written with great humor, and is full of grotesque imagery. "Mad Anthony" especially is in broad caricature, and represented to have lost his horse upon the great occasion.

" His horse that carried all his prog,  
His military speeches,  
His corn-stalk whiskey for his grog —  
Blue stockings and brown breeches."

The cantos were published at different times in Rivington's Gazette. It so happened that the last canto appeared on the very day of André's capture, and ended with the following stanzas, which might be considered ominous: —

" And now I've closed my epic strain,  
I tremble as I show it,  
Lest this same warrior-drover, Wayne,  
Should ever catch the poet."

## CHAPTER XXX.

INTERVIEW OF WASHINGTON WITH THE FRENCH OFFICERS AT  
HARTFORD — PLAN OF ATTACK DISCONCERTED — WASHINGTON'S  
RETURN — SCENES AT ARNOLD'S HEAD-QUARTERS IN THE HIGH-  
LANDS — TIDINGS OF ANDRÉ'S CAPTURE — FLIGHT OF ARNOLD  
— LETTERS FROM THE TRAITOR — WASHINGTON'S PRECAUTIONS  
— SITUATION OF MRS. ARNOLD.

On the very day that the treasonable conference between Arnold and André took place, on the banks of Haverstraw Bay, Washington had his interview with the French officers at Hartford. It led to no important result. Intelligence was received that the squadron of the Count de Guichen, on which they had relied to give them superiority by sea, had sailed for Europe. This disconcerted their plans, and Washington, in consequence, set out two or three days sooner than had been anticipated on his return to his head-quarters on the Hudson. He was accompanied by Lafayette and General Knox with their suites; also, part of the way, by Count Matthew Dumas, aide-de-camp to Rochambeau. The count, who regarded Washington with an enthusiasm which appears to have been felt by many of the young French officers, gives

an animated picture of the manner in which he was greeted in one of the towns through which they passed. "We arrived there," says he, "at night; the whole population had sallied forth beyond the suburbs. We were surrounded by a crowd of children carrying torches, and reiterating the acclamations of the citizens; all were eager to touch the person of him whom they hailed with loud cries as their father, and they thronged before us so as almost to prevent our moving onward. General Washington, much affected, paused a few moments, and pressing my hand, 'We may be beaten by the English,' said he, 'it is the chance of war; but there is the army they will never conquer!'"

These few words speak that noble confidence in the enduring patriotism of his countrymen, which sustained him throughout all the fluctuating fortunes of the Revolution; yet at this very moment it was about to receive one of the cruellest of wounds.

On approaching the Hudson, Washington took a more circuitous route than the one he had originally intended, striking the river at Fishkill just above the Highlands, that he might visit West Point, and show the marquis the works which had been erected there during his absence in France. Circumstances detained them at night at Fishkill. Their baggage was sent on to Arnold's quarters in the Robinson House, with a message apprising the general that they would breakfast there the next day. In the morning (September 24) they were in the saddle before break of day, having a ride to make of eighteen miles through the mountains. It was a pleasant and animated one. Washington was in excellent spirits, and the buoyant marquis, and genial, warm-hearted Knox, were companions with whom he was always disposed to unbend.

When within a mile of the Robinson House, Washington turned down a cross road leading to the banks of the Hudson. Lafayette apprised him that he was going out of the way, and hinted that Mrs. Arnold must be waiting breakfast for him.

"Ah, marquis!" replied he good-humoredly, "you young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you are eager to be with her as soon as possible. Go you and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me. I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river, but will be with her shortly."

The marquis and General Knox, however, turned off and accompanied him down to the redoubts, while Colonel Hamil-



ton and Lafayette's aide-de-camp, Major James McHenry, continued along the main road to the Robinson House, bearing Washington's apology, and request that the breakfast might not be retarded.

The family with the two aides-de-camp sat down to breakfast. Mrs. Arnold had arrived but four or five days previously from Philadelphia, with her infant child, then about six months old. She was bright and amiable as usual. Arnold was silent and gloomy. It was an anxious moment with him. This was the day appointed for the consummation of the plot, when the enemy's ships were to ascend the river. The return of the commander-in-chief from the East two days sooner than had been anticipated, and his proposed visit to the forts, threatened to disconcert every thing. What might be the consequence Arnold could not conjecture. An interval of fearful imaginings was soon brought to a direful close. In the midst of the repast a horseman alighted at the gate. It was the messenger bearing Jameson's letter to Arnold, stating the capture of André, and that dangerous papers found on him had been forwarded to Washington.

The mine had exploded beneath Arnold's feet; yet in this awful moment he gave an evidence of that quickness of mind which had won laurels for him when in the path of duty. Controlling the dismay that must have smitten him to the heart, he beckoned Mrs. Arnold from the breakfast table, signifying a wish to speak with her in private. When alone with her in her room up stairs, he announced in hurried words that he was a ruined man, and must instantly fly for his life! Overcome by the shock, she fell senseless on the floor. Without pausing to aid her, he hurried down stairs, sent the messenger to her assistance, probably to keep him from an interview with the other officers; returned to the breakfast room, and informed his guests that he must haste to West Point to prepare for the reception of the commander-in-chief; and mounting the horse of the messenger, which stood saddled at the door, galloped down by what is still called Arnold's Path, to the landing-place, where his six-oared barge was moored. Throwing himself into it, he ordered his men to pull out into the middle of the river, and then made down with all speed for Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, saying he must be back soon to meet the commander-in-chief.

Washington arrived at the Robinson House shortly after the flight of the traitor. Being informed that Mrs. Arnold was

in her room, unwell, and that Arnold had gone to West Point to receive him, he took a hasty breakfast, and repaired to the fortress, leaving word that he and his suite would return to dinner.

In crossing the river, he noticed that no salute was fired from the fort, nor was there any preparation to receive him on his landing. Colonel Lamb, the officer in command, who came down to the shore, manifested surprise at seeing him, and apologized for this want of military ceremony, by assuring him he had not been apprised of his intended visit.

"Is not General Arnold here?" demanded Washington.

"No, sir. He has not been here for two days past; nor have I heard from him in that time."

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an animated picture of the manner in which he was greeted in one of the towns through which they passed. "We arrived there," says he, "at night; the whole population had sallied forth beyond the suburbs. We were surrounded by a crowd of children carrying torches, and reiterating the acclamations of the citizens; all were eager to touch the person of him whom they hailed with loud cries as their father, and they thronged before us so as almost to prevent our moving onward. General Washington, much affected, paused a few moments, and pressing my hand, 'We may be beaten by the English,' said he, 'it is the chance of war; but there is the army they will never conquer!'"

These few words speak that noble confidence in the enduring patriotism of his countrymen, which sustained him throughout all the fluctuating fortunes of the Revolution; yet at this very moment it was about to receive one of the cruellest of wounds.

On approaching the Hudson, Washington took a more circuitous route than the one he had originally intended, striking the river at Fishkill just above the Highlands, that he might visit West Point, and show the marquis the works which had been erected there during his absence in France. Circumstances detained them at night at Fishkill. Their baggage was sent on to Arnold's quarters in the Robinson House, with a message apprising the general that they would breakfast there the next day. In the morning (September 24) they were in the saddle before break of day, having a ride to make of eighteen miles through the mountains. It was a pleasant and animated one. Washington was in excellent spirits, and the buoyant marquis, and genial, warm-hearted Knox, were companions with whom he was always disposed to unbend.

When within a mile of the Robinson House, Washington turned down a cross road leading to the banks of the Hudson. Lafayette apprised him that he was going out of the way, and hinted that Mrs. Arnold must be waiting breakfast for him.

"Ah, marquis!" replied he good-humoredly, "you young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you are eager to be with her as soon as possible. Go you and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me. I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river, but will be with her shortly."

The marquis and General Knox, however, turned off and accompanied him down to the redoubts, while Colonel Hamil-

ton and Lafayette's aide-de-camp, Major James McHenry, continued along the main road to the Robinson House, bearing Washington's apology, and request that the breakfast might not be retarded.

The family with the two aides-de-camp sat down to breakfast. Mrs. Arnold had arrived but four or five days previously from Philadelphia, with her infant child, then about six months old. She was bright and amiable as usual. Arnold was silent and gloomy. It was an anxious moment with him. This was the day appointed for the consummation of the plot, when the enemy's ships were to ascend the river. The return of the commander-in-chief from the East two days sooner than had been anticipated, and his proposed visit to the forts, threatened to disconcert every thing. What might be the consequence Arnold could not conjecture. An interval of fearful imaginings was soon brought to a direful close. In the midst of the repast a horseman alighted at the gate. It was the messenger bearing Jameson's letter to Arnold, stating the capture of André, and that dangerous papers found on him had been forwarded to Washington.

The mine had exploded beneath Arnold's feet; yet in this awful moment he gave an evidence of that quickness of mind which had won laurels for him when in the path of duty. Controlling the dismay that must have smitten him to the heart, he beckoned Mrs. Arnold from the breakfast table, signifying a wish to speak with her in private. When alone with her in her room up stairs, he announced in hurried words that he was a ruined man, and must instantly fly for his life! Overcome by the shock, she fell senseless on the floor. Without pausing to aid her, he hurried down stairs, sent the messenger to her assistance, probably to keep him from an interview with the other officers; returned to the breakfast room, and informed his guests that he must haste to West Point to prepare for the reception of the commander-in-chief; and mounting the horse of the messenger, which stood saddled at the door, galloped down by what is still called Arnold's Path, to the landing-place, where his six-oared barge was moored. Throwing himself into it, he ordered his men to pull out into the middle of the river, and then made down with all speed for Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, saying he must be back soon to meet the commander-in-chief.

Washington arrived at the Robinson House shortly after the flight of the traitor. Being informed that Mrs. Arnold was

in her room, unwell, and that Arnold had gone to West Point to receive him, he took a hasty breakfast, and repaired to the fortress, leaving word that he and his suite would return to dinner.

In crossing the river, he noticed that no salute was fired from the fort, nor was there any preparation to receive him on his landing. Colonel Lamb, the officer in command, who came down to the shore, manifested surprise at seeing him, and apologized for this want of military ceremony, by assuring him he had not been apprised of his intended visit.

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"I ask no favor for myself. I have too often experienced the ingratitude of my country to attempt it; but, from the known humanity of your Excellency, I am induced to ask your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance of my country may expose her to. It ought to fall only on me; she is as good and as innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong. I beg she may be permitted to return to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to me as she may choose; from your Excellency I have no fears on her account, but she may suffer from the mistaken fury of the country."

The other letter was from Colonel Beverley Robinson, interceding for the release of André, on the plea that he was on shore under the sanction of a flag of truce, at the request of Arnold. Robinson had hoped to find favor with Washington on the score of their early intimacy.

Notwithstanding Washington's apparent tranquillity and real self-possession, it was a time of appalling distrust. How far the treason had extended; who else might be implicated in it, was unknown. Arnold had escaped, and was actually on board of the Vulture; he knew every thing about the condition of the posts: might he not persuade the enemy, in the present weak state of the garrisons, to attempt a *coup de main*? Washington instantly, therefore, despatched a letter to Colonel Wade, who was in temporary command at West Point, "General Arnold is gone to the enemy," writes he. "I have just now received a line from him enclosing one to Mrs. Arnold, dated on board the Vulture. I request that you will be as vigilant as possible, and as the enemy may have it in contemplation to attempt some enterprise, *even to-night*, against these posts, I wish you to make, immediately after the receipt of this, the best disposition you can of your force, so as to have a proportion of men in each work on the west side of the river."

A regiment stationed in the Highlands was ordered to the same duty, as well as a body of the Massachusetts militia from Fishkill. At half-past seven in the evening, Washington wrote to General Greene, who, in his absence, commanded the army at Tappan; urging him to put the left division in motion as soon as possible, with orders to proceed to King's Ferry, where, or before they should arrive there, they would be met with further orders. "The division," writes he, "will come on light, leaving their heavy baggage to follow. You will also hold all troops in readiness to move on the shortest notice.



Transactions of a most interesting nature and such as will astonish you, have been just discovered."

His next thought was about André. He was not acquainted with him personally, and the intrigues in which he had been engaged, and the errand on which he had come, made him consider him an artful and resolute person. He had possessed himself of dangerous information, and in a manner had been arrested with the key of the citadel in his pocket. On the same evening, therefore, Washington wrote to Colonel Jameson, charging that every precaution should be taken to prevent Major André from making his escape. "He will no doubt effect it, if possible; and in order that he may not have it in his power, you will send him under the care of such a party and so many officers as to preclude him from the least opportunity of doing it. That he may be less liable to be recaptured by the enemy, who will no doubt make every effort to regain him, he had better be conducted to this place by some upper road, rather than by the route of Crompond. I would not wish Mr. André to be treated with insult; but he does not appear to stand upon the footing of a common prisoner of war, and, therefore, he is not entitled to the usual indulgences which they receive, and is to be most closely and narrowly watched."

In the mean time, Mrs. Arnold remained in her room in a state bordering on frenzy. Arnold might well confide in the humanity and delicacy of Washington in respect to her. He regarded her with the sincerest commiseration, acquitting her of all previous knowledge of her husband's guilt. On remitting to her, by one of his aides-de-camp, the letter of her husband, written on board of the Vulture, he informed her that he had done all that depended upon himself to have him arrested, but not having succeeded, he experienced a pleasure in assuring her of his safety.<sup>1</sup>

A letter of Hamilton's written at the time, with all the sympathies of a young man, gives a touching picture of Washington's first interview with her. "She for a time entirely lost herself. The general went up to see her, and she upbraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears, sometimes she pressed her infant to her bosom, and lamented its fate occasioned by the imprudence of its father, in a manner that would have pierced insensibility itself. All the sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of innocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and

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<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of Lafayette, i. p. 264.

all the fondness of a mother, showed themselves in her appearance and conduct."

During the brief time she remained at the Robinson House, she was treated with the utmost deference and delicacy, but soon set off, under a passport of Washington, for her father's house in Philadelphia.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

ANDRÉ'S CONDUCT AS A PRISONER — HIS CONVERSATION WITH COLONEL TALLMADGE — STORY OF NATHAN HALE — ANDRÉ'S PRISON AT TAPPAN — CORRESPONDENCE ON HIS BEHALF — HIS TRIAL — EXECUTION — REWARD OF THE CAPTORS — REWARD OF ARNOLD — HIS PROCLAMATION — AFTER FORTUNES OF MRS. ARNOLD.

On the 26th of September, the day after the treason of Arnold had been revealed to Washington, André arrived at the Robinson House, having been brought on in the night, under escort and in charge of Major Tallmadge. Washington made many inquiries of the major, but declined to have the prisoner brought into his presence, apparently entertaining a strong idea of his moral obliquity, from the nature of the scheme in which he had been engaged, and the circumstances under which he had been arrested.

The same evening he transmitted him to West Point, and shortly afterwards, Joshua H. Smith, who had likewise been arrested. Still, not considering them secure even there, he determined on the following day to send them on to the camp. In a letter to Greene he writes: "They will be under an escort of horse, and I wish you to have separate houses in camp ready for their reception, in which they may be kept perfectly secure; and also strong, trusty guards, trebly officered, that a part may be constantly in the room with them. They have not been permitted to be together, and must be kept apart. I would wish the room for Mr. André to be a decent one, and that he may be treated with civility; but that he may be so guarded as to preclude a possibility of his escaping, which he will certainly attempt to effect, if it shall seem practicable in the most distant degree."

Major Tallmadge continued to have the charge of André. Not regarding him from the same anxious point with the com-

mander-in-chief, and having had opportunities of acquiring a personal knowledge of him, he had become fascinated by his engaging qualities. "The ease and affability of his manners," writes he, "polished by the refinement of good society and a finished education, made him a most delightful companion. It often drew tears from my eyes, to find him so agreeable in conversation on different subjects, when I reflected on his future fate, and that too, as I feared, so near at hand."

Early on the morning of the 28th, the prisoners were embarked in a barge, to be conveyed from West Point to King's Ferry. Tallmadge placed André by his side on the after seat of the barge. Being both young, of equal rank, and prepossessing manners, a frank and cordial intercourse had grown up between them. By a cartel, mutually agreed upon, each might put to the other any question not involving a third person. They were passing below the rocky heights of West Point, and in full view of the fortress, when Tallmadge asked André whether he would have taken an active part in the attack on it, should Arnold's plan have succeeded. André promptly answered in the affirmative; pointed out a table of land on the west shore, where he would have landed at the head of a select corps, described the route he would have taken up the mountain to a height in the rear of Fort Putnam, overlooking the whole parade of West Point — "and this he did," writes Tallmadge, "with much greater exactness than I could have done. This eminence he would have reached without difficulty, as Arnold would have disposed of the garrison in such manner as to be capable of little or no opposition — *and then the key of the country would have been in his hands, and he would have had the glory of the splendid achievement.*"

Tallmadge fairly kindled into admiration as André, with hereditary French vivacity, acted the scene he was describing. "It seemed to him," he said, "as if André were entering the fort sword in hand."

He ventured to ask what was to have been his reward had he succeeded. "Military glory was all he sought. The thanks of his general and the approbation of his king would have been a rich reward for such an undertaking."

Tallmadge was perfectly charmed, but adds quietly, "I think he further remarked, that, if he had succeeded, *he was to have been promoted to the rank of a brigadier-general.*"

While thus the prisoner, confident of the merit of what he had attempted, kindled with the idea of an imaginary triumph, and the youthful officer who had him in charge, caught fire

from his enthusiasm, the barge glided through that solemn defile of mountains, through which, but a few days previously Arnold, the panic-stricken traitor of the drama, had fled like a felon.

After disembarking at King's Ferry near Stony Point, they set off for Tappan under the escort of a body of horse. As they approached the Clove, a deep defile in the rear of the Highlands, André, who rode beside Tallmadge, became solicitous to know the opinion of the latter as to what would be the result of his capture, and in what light he would be regarded by General Washington and by a military tribunal, should one be ordered.

Tallmadge evaded the question as long as possible, but being urged to a full and explicit reply, gave it, he says, in the following words: "I had a much-loved classmate in Yale College, by the name of Nathan Hale, who entered the army in 1775. Immediately after the battle of Long Island, General Washington wanted information respecting the strength, position, and probable movements of the enemy. Captain Hale tendered his services, went over to Brooklyn, and was taken, just as he was passing the outposts of the enemy on his return; said I with emphasis—'Do you remember the sequel of the story?' 'Yes,' said André. 'He was hanged as a spy! But you surely do not consider his case and mine alike?' 'Yes, precisely similar; and similar will be your fate.'"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The fate of the heroic youth here alluded to, deserves a more ample notice. Born in Coventry, Connecticut, June 6th, 1755, he entered Yale College in 1770, and graduated with some distinction in September, 1773, having previously contracted an engagement of marriage; not unlike André in this respect, who wooed his "Honora" at eighteen. On quitting college he engaged as a teacher, as is common with young men in New England, while studying for a profession. His half-formed purpose was to devote himself to the ministry. As a teacher of youth, he was eminently skilful, and equally appreciated by parents and pupils. He became universally popular. "Everybody loved him," said a lady of his acquaintance, "he was so sprightly, intelligent and kind, and so handsome."

He was teaching at New London, when an express arrived, bringing tidings of the outbreak at Lexington. A town meeting was called, and Hale was among the most ardent of the speakers, proposing an instant march to the scene of hostilities, and offering to volunteer. "A sense of duty," writes he to his father, "urges me to sacrifice every thing for my country."

He served in the army before Boston as a Lieutenant; prevailed on his company to extend their term of service by offering them his own pay, and for his good conduct received from Congress the commission of captain. He commanded a company in Colonel Knowlton's regiment in the following year. After the disastrous battle of Long Island, Washington applied to that officer for a competent person to penetrate the enemy's camp, and procure intelligence of their designs; a service deemed vital in that dispiriting crisis. Hale, in the ardor of patriotism, volunteered for the unenviable enterprise, though fully aware of its peril, and the consequences of capture.

Assuming his old character as schoolmaster, he crossed the Sound at night from Norwalk to Huntington on Long Island, visited the British encampments unsuspected, made drawings of the enemy's works, and noted down memoranda in Latin of the information he gathered, and then retraced his steps to Huntington, where a boat was to meet him and convey him back to the Connecticut shore. Unfortunately a British guard ship was at that time anchored out of view in the Sound, and had sent a boat on shore for water. Hale mistook it for the expected boat, and did not discover his mistake until he found

"He endeavored," adds Tallmadge, "to answer my remarks, but it was manifest he was more troubled in spirit than I had ever seen him before."

"We stopped at the Clove to dine and let the horse-guard refresh," continues Tallmadge. "While there, André kept reviewing his shabby dress, and finally remarked to me, that he was positively ashamed to go to the head-quarters of the American army in such a plight. I called my servant and directed him to bring my dragoon cloak, which I presented to Major André. This he refused to take for some time; but I insisted on it, and he finally put it on and rode in it to Tappan."

The place which had been prepared to receive Major André, is still pointed out as the "76 Stone House." The caution which Washington had given as to his safe keeping, was strictly observed by Colonel Scammel, the adjutant-general, as may be seen by his orders to the officer of the guards.

"Major André, the prisoner under your guard, is not only an officer of distinction in the British army, but a man of infinite art and address, who will leave no means unattempted to make his escape and avoid the ignominious death which awaits him. You are therefore, in addition to your sentries, to keep two officers constantly in the room with him, with their swords drawn, whilst the other officers who are out of the room are constantly to keep walking the entry and around the sentries, to see that they are alert. No person whatever to be permitted to enter the room, or speak with him, unless by direction of the commander-in-chief. You are by no means to suffer him to go out of the room on any pretext whatever."<sup>1</sup>

The capture of André caused a great sensation at New York. He was universally popular with the army, and an especial favorite of Sir Henry Clinton. The latter addressed a letter to Washington on the 29th, claiming the release of André on similar ground to that urged by Colonel Robinson — his having visited Arnold at the particular request of that general officer, and under the sanction of a flag of truce; and his having been

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himself in the hands of enemies. He was stripped and searched, the plans and memoranda were found concealed in the soles of his shoes, and proved him to be a spy.

He was conveyed to the guard ship, and thence to New York, where he was landed on the 21st of September, the day of the great fire. He was taken to General Howe's head-quarters, and, after brief parley with his judge, ordered for execution the next morning at daybreak — a sentence carried out by the provost marshal, the brutal and infamous Cunningham, who refused his request for a Bible, and destroyed a letter he had addressed to his mother, for the reason afterwards given by himself, "that the rebels should never know they had a man who could die with such firmness." His patriot spirit shone forth in his dying words, — "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

<sup>1</sup> From a copy among the papers of General Hand.

stopped while travelling under Arnold's passports. The same letter enclosed one addressed by Arnold to Sir Henry, and intended as a kind of certificate of the innocence of André. "I commanded at the time at West Point," writes the renegade, "had an undoubted right to send my flag of truce to Major André, who came to me under that protection, and, having held conversation with him, I delivered him confidential papers in my own handwriting to deliver to your Excellency. Thinking it much properer he should return by land, I directed him to make use of the feigned name of John Anderson, under which he had, by my direction, come on shore, and gave him my passports to go to the White Plains, on his way to New York. . . . All which I had then a right to do, being in the actual service of America, under the orders of General Washington, and commanding general at West Point and its dependencies." He concludes, therefore, that André cannot fail of being immediately sent to New York.

Neither the official demand of Sir Henry Clinton, nor the impudent certificate of Arnold, had any effect on the steady mind of Washington. He considered the circumstances under which André had been taken such as would have justified the most summary proceedings, but he determined to refer the case to the examination and decision of a board of general officers, which he convened on the 29th of September, the day after his arrival at Tappan. It was composed of six major-generals, Greene, Stirling, St. Clair, Lafayette, R. Howe, and Steuben; and eight brigadiers, Parsons, James Clinton, Knox, Glover, Paterson, Hand, Huntingdon, and Stark. General Greene, who was well versed in military law, and was a man of sound head and kind heart, was president, and Colonel John Lawrence, judge advocate-general.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who, like Tallmadge, had drawn to André in his misfortunes, as had most of the young American officers, gives, in letters to his friends, many interesting particulars concerning the conduct of the prisoner. "When brought before the board of officers," writes he, "he met with every mark of indulgence, and was required to answer no interrogatory which would even embarrass his feelings. On his part, while he carefully concealed every thing that might implicate others, he frankly confessed all the facts relating to himself, and upon his confession, without the trouble of examining a witness, the board made up their report."

It briefly stated the circumstances of the case, and concluded with the opinion of the court, that Major André, adjutant-

general of the British army, ought to be considered a spy from the enemy, and agreeably to the law and usage of nations, ought to suffer death. In a conversation with Hamilton, André acknowledged the candor, liberality, and indulgence with which the board had conducted themselves in their painful inquiry. He met the result with manly firmness. "I foresee my fate," said he; "and though I pretend not to play the hero, or to be indifferent about life, yet I am reconciled to whatever may happen; conscious that misfortune, not guilt, has brought it upon me."

Even in this situation of gathering horrors, he thought of others more than of himself. "There is only one thing that disturbs my tranquillity," said he to Hamilton. "Sir Henry Clinton has been too good to me; he has been lavish of his kindness. I am bound to him by too many obligations, and love him too well, to bear the thought that he should reproach himself, or others should reproach him, on the supposition of my having conceived myself obliged, by his instructions, to run the risk I did. I would not for the world leave a sting in his mind that should embitter his future days." He could scarce finish the sentence; bursting into tears, in spite of his efforts to suppress them, and with difficulty collected himself enough afterwards to add, "I wish to be permitted to assure him that I did not act under this impression, but submitted to a necessity imposed upon me, as contrary to my own inclination, as to his wishes."

His request was complied with, and he wrote a letter to Sir Henry Clinton to the above purport. He made mention also of his mother and three sisters, to whom the value of his commission would be an object. "It is needless," said he, "to be more explicit on this subject; I am persuaded of your Excellency's goodness."<sup>1</sup>

He concluded by saying, "I receive the greatest attention from his Excellency, General Washington, and from every person under whose charge I happen to be placed."

This letter accompanied one from Washington to Sir Henry Clinton, stating the report of the board of inquiry, omitting the sentence. "From these proceedings," observes he, "it is evident that Major André was employed in the execution of measures very foreign to the objects of flags of truce, and such

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<sup>1</sup> The commission was sold by Sir Henry Clinton, for the benefit of André's mother and sisters. The King, also, settled a pension on the mother and offered to confer the honor of knighthood on André's brother, in order to wipe away all stain from the family, that the circumstances of his fate might be thought to occasion.

as they were never meant to authorize in the most distant degree; and this gentleman confessed with the greatest candor, in the course of his examination, that it was impossible for him to suppose that he came on shore under the sanction of a flag."

Captain Aaron Ogden, a worthy officer of the New Jersey line, was selected by Washington to bear these despatches to the enemy's post at Paulus Hook, thence to be conveyed across the Hudson to New York. Before his departure, he called by Washington's request on the Marquis Lafayette, who gave him instructions to sound the officer commanding at that post whether Sir Henry Clinton might not be willing to deliver up Arnold in exchange for André. Ogden arrived at Paulus Hook in the evening, and made the suggestion, as if incidentally, in the course of conversation. The officer demanded if he had any authority from Washington for such an intimation. "I have no such assurance from General Washington," replied he, "but I am prepared to say, that if such a proposal were made, I believe it would be accepted, and Major André set at liberty."

The officer crossed the river before morning, and communicated the matter to Sir Henry Clinton, but the latter instantly rejected the expedient as incompatible with honor and military principle.

In the mean time, the character, appearance, deportment and fortunes of André, had interested the feelings of the oldest and sternest soldiers around him, and completely captivated the sympathies of the younger ones. He was treated with the greatest respect and kindness throughout his confinement, and his table was supplied from that of the commander-in-chief.

Hamilton, who was in daily intercourse with him, describes him as well improved by education and travel, with an elegant turn of mind, and a taste for the fine arts. He had attained some proficiency in poetry, music, and painting. His sentiments were elevated, his elocution was fluent, his address easy, polite and engaging, with a softness that conciliated affection. His talents and accomplishments were accompanied, says Hamilton, by a diffidence that induced you to give him credit for more than appeared.

No one felt stronger sympathy in his case than Colonel Tallmadge, no doubt from the consideration that he had been the means of bringing him into this awful predicament, by inducing Colonel Jameson to have him conducted back when on the way to Arnold's quarters. A letter lies before us, written by Tallmadge to Colonel Samuel B. Webb, one of



Washington's aides-de-camp. "Poor André, who has been under my charge almost ever since he was taken, has yesterday had his trial, and though his sentence is not known, a disgraceful death is undoubtedly allotted him. By heavens, Colonel Webb, I never saw a man whose fate I foresaw whom I so sincerely pitied. He is a young fellow of the greatest accomplishments, and was the prime minister of Sir Henry on all occasions. He has unbosomed his heart to me so fully, and indeed let me know almost every motive of his actions since he came out on his late mission, that he has endeared me to him exceedingly. Unfortunate man! He will undoubtedly suffer death to-morrow; and though he knows his fate, seems to be as cheerful as if he were going to an assembly. I am sure he will go to the gallows less fearful for his fate, and with less concern than I shall behold the tragedy. Had he been tried by a court of ladies, he is so genteel, handsome, polite a young gentleman, that I am confident they would have acquitted him. But enough of André, who, though he dies lamented, falls justly."

The execution was to have taken place on the 1st of October, at five o'clock in the afternoon; but in the interim Washington received a second letter from Sir Henry Clinton, dated September 30, expressing an opinion that the board of inquiry had not been rightly informed of all the circumstances on which a judgment ought to be formed, and that, in order that he might be perfectly apprised of the state of the matter before he proceeded to put that judgment in execution, he should send a commission on the following day, composed of Lieutenant-Governor Elliot, William Smith, chief justice of the province, and Lieutenant-General Robertson, to wait near Dobbs' Ferry for permission and safe conduct to meet Washington, or such persons as he should appoint to converse with them on the subject.

This letter caused a postponement of the execution, and General Greene was sent to meet the commissioners at Dobbs' Ferry. They came up in the morning of the 1st of October, in a schooner, with a flag of truce, and were accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson. General Robertson, however, was the only commissioner permitted to land, the others not being military officers. A long conference took place between him and General Greene, without any agreement of opinion upon the question at issue. Greene returned to camp promising to report faithfully to Washington the arguments urged by Robertson, and to inform the latter of the result.

A letter also was delivered to Greene for Washington, which

Arnold had sent by the commissioners, in which the traitor re-asserted the right he had possessed, as commanding officer of the department, to transact all the matters with which André was inculpated, and insisted that the latter ought not to suffer for them. "But," added he, "if after this just and candid representation of Major André's case, the board of general officers adhere to their former opinion, I shall suppose it dictated by passion and resentment; and if that gentleman should suffer the severity of their sentence, I shall think myself bound, by every tie of duty and honor, to retaliate on such unhappy persons of your army as may fall within my power, that the respect due to flags, and to the laws of nations, may be better understood and observed. I have further to observe, that forty of the principal inhabitants of South Carolina have justly forfeited their lives, which have hitherto been spared by the clemency of his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, who cannot in justice extend his mercy to them any longer, if Major André suffers; which, in all probability, will open a scene of blood at which humanity shudders.

"Suffer me to entreat your Excellency, for your own sake and the honor of humanity, and the love you have of justice, that you suffer not an unjust sentence to touch the life of Major André. But if this warning should be disregarded, and he suffer, I call Heaven and earth to witness, that your Excellency will be justly answerable for the torrent of blood that may be spilt in consequence."

Beside this impudent and despicable letter, there was another from Arnold containing the farce of a resignation, and concluding with the following sentence: "At the same time I beg leave to assure your Excellency, that my attachment to the true interests of my country is invariable, and that I am actuated by the same principle which has ever been the governing rule of my conduct in this unhappy contest."

The letters of Arnold were regarded with merited contempt. Greene, in a brief letter to General Robertson, informed him that he had made as full a report of their conference to the commander-in-chief, as his memory would serve, but that it had made no alteration in Washington's opinion and determination. Robertson was piqued at the brevity of the note, and professed to doubt whether Greene's memory had served him with sufficient fulness and exactness; he addressed therefore to Washington his own statement of his reasoning on the subject; after despatching which he and the other commissioners returned in the schooner to New York.

During this day of respite André had conducted himself with his usual tranquillity. A likeness of himself, seated at a table in his guard-room, which he sketched with a pen and gave to the officer on guard, is still extant. It being announced to him that one o'clock on the following day was fixed on for his execution, he remarked, that since it was his lot to die, there was still a choice in the mode; he therefore addressed the following note to Washington:

“SIR: — Buoyed above the terror of death by the consciousness of a life devoted to honorable pursuits, and stained with no action that can give me remorse, I trust that the request I make to your Excellency at this serious period, and which is to soften my last moments, will not be rejected. Sympathy towards a soldier will surely induce your Excellency and a military tribunal to adapt the mode of my death to the feelings of a man of honor.

“Let me hope, sir, that if aught in my character impresses you with esteem towards me: if aught in my misfortunes marks me as the victim of policy and not of resentment, I shall experience the operation of these feelings in your breast by being informed that I am not to die on a gibbet.”

Had Washington consulted his feelings merely, this affecting appeal might not have been in vain, for, though not impulsive, he was eminently benevolent. André himself had testified to the kind treatment he had experienced from the commander-in-chief since his capture, though no personal interview had taken place. Washington had no popular censure to apprehend should he exercise indulgence, for the popular feeling was with the prisoner. But he had a high and tenacious sense of the duties and responsibilities of his position, and never more than in this trying moment, when he had to elevate himself above the contagious sympathies of those around him, dismiss all personal considerations, and regard the peculiar circumstances of the case. The long course of insidious operations which had been pursued to undermine the loyalty of one of his most trusted officers; the greatness of the evil which the treason would have effected, if successful; the uncertainty how far the enemy had carried, or might still be carrying, their scheme of corruption, for anonymous intimations spoke of treachery in other quarters; all these considerations pointed this out as a case in which a signal example was required.

And what called for particular indulgence to the agent, if not instigator of this enormous crime, who had thus been provi-

dentially detected in disguise, and with the means of its consummation concealed upon his person? His errand, as it has been eloquently urged, "viewed in the light of morality, and even of that chivalry from which modern war pretends to derive its maxims, was one of infamy. He had been commissioned to buy with gold what steel could not conquer; to drive a bargain with one ready for a price to become a traitor; to count out the thirty pieces of silver by which British generals and British gentlemen were not ashamed to purchase the betrayal of a cause, whose shining virtue repelled their power, and dimmed the glory of their arms."<sup>1</sup>

Even the language of traffic in which this negotiation had been carried on between the pseudo-Gustavus and John Anderson, had, as has before been observed, something ignoble and debasing to the chivalrous aspirant who stooped to use it; especially when used as a crafty covering in bargaining for a man's soul.<sup>2</sup>

It has been alleged in André's behalf, as a mitigating circumstance, that he was involuntarily a spy. It is true, he did not come on shore in borrowed garb, nor with a design to pass himself off for another, and procure secret information; but he came, under cloak of midnight, in supposed safety, to effect the betrayal of a holy trust; and it was his undue eagerness to secure the objects of this clandestine interview, that brought him into the condition of an undoubted spy. It certainly should not soften our view of his mission, that he embarked in it without intending to subject himself to danger. A spice of danger would have given it a spice of heroism, however spurious. When the rendezvous was first projected, he sought, through an indirect channel, to let Arnold know that he would come out with a flag. (We allude to a letter written by him from New York on the 7th of September, under his feigned signature, to Colonel Sheldon; evidently intended to be seen by Arnold; "I will endeavor to obtain permission to go out with a flag.") If an interview had taken place under that sacred protection, and a triumphant treason had been the result, what a brand it would have affixed to André's name, that he had prostituted a flag of truce to such an end.

We dwell on these matters, not to check the sentiment of

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<sup>1</sup> Speech of the Hon. Henry J. Raymond, at the dedication of the André monument.

<sup>2</sup> See letter of Gustavus to John Anderson. "My partner of whom I hinted in a former letter, has about ten thousand pounds cash in hand, ready for a speculation, if any should offer; I have also one thousand pounds in hand, and can collect fifteen hundred more in two or three days. Add to this, I have some credit. From these hints you can judge of the purchase that can be made."

sympathy awakened in André's behalf by his personal qualities, but to vindicate the fair name of Washington from that "blot" which some have attempted to cast upon it, because, in exercising his stern duty as protector of the public weal, during a time of secret treason, he listened to policy and justice rather than mercy. In doing so, he took counsel with some of his general officers. Their opinions coincided with his own — that under present circumstances, it was important to give a signal warning to the enemy, by a rigorous observance of the rules of war and the usages of nations in like cases.<sup>1</sup>

But although André's request as to the mode of his death was not to be granted, it was thought best to let him remain in uncertainty on the subject; no answer, therefore, was returned to his note. On the morning of the 2d, he maintained a calm demeanor, though all around him were gloomy and silent. He even rebuked his servant for shedding tears. Having breakfasted, he dressed himself with care in the full uniform of a British officer, which he had sent for to New York, placed his hat upon the table, and accosting the officers on guard — "I am ready," said he, "at any moment, gentlemen, to wait upon you."

He walked to the place of execution between two subaltern officers, arm in arm, with a serene countenance, bowing to several gentlemen whom he knew. Colonel Tallmadge accompanied him, and we quote his words. "When he came within sight of the gibbet, he appeared to be startled, and inquired with some emotion whether he was not to be shot. Being informed that the mode first appointed for his death could not consistently be altered, he exclaimed, 'How hard is my fate!' but immediately added, 'it will soon be over.' I then shook hands with him under the gallows, and retired."<sup>1</sup>

While waiting near the gallows until preparations were made, says another authority, who was present, he evinced some nervousness, putting his foot on a stone and rolling it; and making an effort to swallow, as if checking an hysterical affection

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<sup>1</sup> We subjoin a British officer's view of André's case. "He was tried by a board of general officers as a spy, and condemned to be hanged. The American general has been censured for directing this ignominious sentence to be carried into execution; but doubtless Major André was well aware when he undertook the negotiation, of the fate that awaited him should he fall into the hands of the enemy. The laws of war award to spies the punishment of death. It would, therefore, be difficult to assign a reason why Major André should have been exempted from that fate to which all others are doomed under similar circumstances, although the amiable qualities of the man rendered the individual case a subject of peculiar commiseration." — *Origin and Services of the Coldstream Guards*; by COLONEL MACKINNON, vol. ii. p. 9.

<sup>1</sup> MSS. of Colonel B. Tallmadge in possession of his daughter, Mrs. J. P. Cushman, of Troy, N.Y.

of the throat. All things being ready, he stepped into the wagon; appeared to shrink for an instant, but recovering himself, exclaimed: "It will be but a momentary pang!"

Taking off his hat and stock, and opening his shirt collar, he deliberately adjusted the noose to his neck, after which he took out a handkerchief, and tied it over his eyes. Being told by the officer in command that his arms must be bound, he drew out a second handkerchief, with which they were pinioned. Colonel Scammel now told him that he had an opportunity to speak, if he desired it. His only reply was, "I pray you to bear witness that I meet my fate like a brave man." The wagon moved from under him, and left him suspended. He died almost without a struggle.<sup>1</sup> He remained suspended for about half an hour, during which time a deathlike stillness prevailed over the surrounding multitude. His remains were interred within a few yards of the place of his execution, whence they were transferred to England in 1821, by the British consul, then resident in New York, and were buried in Westminster Abbey, near a mural monument which had been erected to his memory.

Never has any man, suffering under like circumstances, awakened a more universal sympathy, even among those of the country against which he had practised. His story is one of the touching themes of the Revolution, and his name is still spoken of with kindness in the local traditions of the neighborhood where he was captured.

Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, passed a high eulogium on the captors of André, and recommended them for a handsome gratuity; for having, in all probability, prevented one of the severest strokes that could have been meditated by the enemy. Congress accordingly expressed, in a formal vote, a high sense of their virtuous and patriotic conduct; awarded to each of them a farm, a pension for life of two hundred dollars, and a silver medal, bearing on one side an escutcheon on which was engraved the word FIDELITY, and on the other side the motto, *Vincit amor Patriæ*. These medals were delivered to them by General Washington at headquarters, with impressive ceremony.

Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors, had been present at the execution of André, and was deeply affected by it. He was not fond of recalling the subject, and in after life could rarely speak of André without tears.

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<sup>1</sup> Thatcher's Military Journal, p. 275.

Joshua H. Smith, who aided in bringing André and Arnold together, was tried by a court-martial, on a charge of participating in the treason, but was acquitted, no proof appearing of his having had any knowledge of Arnold's plot, though it was thought he must have been conscious of something wrong in an interview so mysteriously conducted.

Arnold was now made brigadier-general in the British service, and put on an official level with honorable men who scorned to associate with the traitor. What golden reward he was to have received had his treason been successful, is not known; but six thousand three hundred and fifteen pounds sterling were paid to him, as a compensation for losses which he pretended to have suffered in going over to the enemies of his country.

The vilest culprit, however, shrinks from sustaining the obloquy of his crimes. Shortly after his arrival in New York, Arnold published an address to the inhabitants of America, in which he endeavored to vindicate his conduct. He alleged that he had originally taken up arms merely to aid in obtaining a redress of grievances. He had considered the Declaration of Independence precipitate, and the reasons for it obviated by the subsequent proffers of the British government; and he inveighed against Congress for rejecting those offers, without submitting them to the people.

Finally, the treaty with France, a proud, ancient and crafty foe, the enemy of Protestant faith and of real liberty, had completed, he said, the measure of his indignation, and determined him to abandon a cause sustained by iniquity and controlled by usurpers.

Besides this address, he issued a proclamation inviting the officers and soldiers of the American army, who had the real interest of their country at heart, and who were determined to be no longer the tools and dupes of Congress and of France, to rally under the royal standard, and fight for true American liberty; holding out promises of large bounties and liberal subsistence, with compensation for all the implements and accoutrements of war they might bring with them.

Speaking of this address, "I am at a loss," said Washington, "which to admire most, the confidence of Arnold in publishing it, or the folly of the enemy in supposing that a production signed by so infamous a character will have any weight with the people of the States, or any influence upon our officers abroad." He was right. Both the address and the proclamation were regarded by Americans with the contempt

they merited. None rallied to the standard of the renegade but a few deserters and refugees, who were already within the British lines, and prepared for any desperate or despicable service.<sup>1</sup>

Colonel John Laurens, former aide-de-camp to Washington, in speaking of André's fate, observed, "Arnold must undergo a punishment comparatively more severe, in the permanent, increasing torment of a mental hell." Washington doubted it. "He wants feeling," said he. "From some traits of his character which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse. And in a letter to Governor Reed, Washington writes, "Arnold's conduct is so villainously perfidious, that there are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart. That overruling Providence which has so often and so remarkably interposed in our favor, never manifested itself more conspicuously than in the timely discovery of his horrid intention to surrender the post and garrison of West Point into the hands of the enemy. . . . The confidence and folly which have marked the subsequent conduct of this man, are of a piece with his villainy, and all three are perfect in their kind."

Mrs. Arnold, on arriving at her father's house in Philadelphia, had decided on a separation from her husband, to whom she could not endure the thought of returning after his dis-

<sup>1</sup> The following passages of a letter written by Sir Thomas Romilly in London, December 12, 1780, to the Rev. John Roget, are worthy of citation :

"What do you think of Arnold's conduct? you may well suppose he does not want advocates here. I cannot join with them. If he thought the Americans not justified in continuing the war, after the offer of such favorable terms as the commissioners held out to them, why did he keep his command for two years afterwards? . . .

"The arguments used by Clinton and Arnold in their letters to Washington, to prove that André could not be considered as a spy, are, first, that he had with him, when he was taken, a protection of Arnold, who was at that time acting under a commission of the Congress, and, therefore, competent to give protections. Certainly he was, to all strangers to his negotiations with Clinton, but not to André, who knew him to be at that time a traitor to the Congress — nay, more, whose protection was granted for no other purpose but to promote and give effect to his treachery. In the second place, they say that at the time he was taken he was upon neutral ground; but they do not deny that he had been within the American lines in disguise. The letters written by André himself, show a firm, cool intrepidity, worthy a more glorious end. . . .

"The fate of this unfortunate young man, and the manly style of his letters, have raised more compassion here than the loss of thousands in battle, and have excited a warmer indignation against the Americans, than any former act of the Congress. When the passions of men are so deeply affected, you will not expect to find them keep within the bounds of reason. Panegyrics of the gallant André are unbounded; they call him the English Mutius, and talk of erecting monuments to his memory. Certainly, no man in his situation could have behaved with more determined courage; but his situation was by no means such as to admit of these exaggerated praises."



honor. This course, however, was not allowed her. The executive council, wrongfully suspecting her of having aided in the correspondence between her husband and André, knowing its treasonable tendency, ordered her to leave the State within fourteen days, and not to return during the continuance of the war. "We tried every means," writes one of her connections, "to prevail on the council to permit her to stay among us, and not compel her to go to that infernal villain, her husband.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Shippen (her father) had promised the council, and Mrs. Arnold had signed a writing to the same purpose, engaging not to write to General Arnold any letters without showing them to the council, if she was permitted to stay." It was all in vain, and, strongly against her will, she rejoined her husband in New York. Her fear for her personal safety from the fury of the people proved groundless. That scrupulous respect for the female sex, so prevalent throughout the United States, was her safeguard. While the whole country resounded with execrations of her husband's guilt; while his effigy was dragged through the streets of town and village, burned at the stake, or swung on the gibbet, she passed on secure from injury or insult. The execrations of the populace were silenced at her approach. Arriving at nightfall at a village where they were preparing for one of these burnings in effigy, the pyre remained unkindled, the people dispersed quietly to their homes, and the wife of the traitor was suffered to sleep in peace.

She returned home but once, about five years after her exile, and was treated with such coldness and neglect that she declared she never could come again. In England her charms and virtues, it is said, procured her sympathy and friendship, and helped to sustain the social position of her husband, who, however, was generally slighted, and sometimes insulted.<sup>2</sup> She died in London, in the winter of 1796. In recent years it has been maintained that Mrs. Arnold was actually cognizant and participant of her husband's crime; but, after carefully examining all the proofs adduced, we remain of opinion that she was innocent.

We have been induced to enter thus largely into the circumstances of this story, from the undiminished interest taken in it by the readers of American history. Indeed, a romance has been thrown around the memory of the unfortunate André, which increases with the progress of years; while the name of Arnold will stand sadly conspicuous to the end of time, as the

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Papers relating to the Provincial Hist. of Pennsylvania, p. lxiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, p. lxvi.

only American officer of note, throughout all the trials and vicissitudes of the Revolution, who proved traitor to the glorious cause of his country.

**NOTE.**—The following fragment of a letter from Arnold's mother to him in early life, was recently put into our hands. Well would it have been for him had he adhered to its pious, though humble counsels.

Norwich April 12 1754.

"dear childe. I received yours of 1 instant and was glad to hear that you was well: pray my dear let your first concern be to make your peace with god as itt is of all concerns of ye greatest importance. Keep a stedy watch over your thoughts, words and actions. be dutifull to superiors obliging to equals and affibel to inferiors. . . .

from your affectionate

Hannah Arnold.

P.S. I have sent you fifty shillings youse itt prudently as you are accountabell to God and your father. Your father and aunt joyns with me in love and servis to Mr. Cogswell and ladey and yourself. Your sister is from home.

To Mr

benedict arnold

at

canterbury

your father put  
twenty more

## CHAPTER XXXII.

GREENE TAKES COMMAND AT WEST POINT — INSIDIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SHAKE THE CONFIDENCE OF WASHINGTON IN HIS OFFICERS — PLAN TO ENTRAP ARNOLD — CHARACTER OF SERGEANT CHAMPE — COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF GATES — GREENE APPOINTED TO THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT — WASHINGTON'S INSTRUCTIONS TO HIM — INCURSIONS FROM CANADA — MOHAWK VALLEY RAVAGED — STATE OF THE ARMY — REFORMS ADOPTED — ENLISTMENT FOR THE WAR — HALF PAY.

As the enemy would now possess the means, through Arnold, of informing themselves thoroughly about West Point, Washington hastened to have the works completed and strongly garrisoned. Major-General Greene was ordered to march with the Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, and Stark's brigades, and take temporary command (ultimately to be transferred to General Heath), and the Pennsylvania troops, which had been thrown into the fortress at the time of Arnold's desertion, were relieved. Washington himself took post with his main army, at Prakeness, near Passaic Falls in New Jersey.

Insidious attempts had been made by anonymous papers, and other means, as we have already hinted, to shake the confidence of the commander-in-chief in his officers, and especially to implicate General St. Clair in the late conspiracy. Washington was exceedingly disturbed in mind for a time, and engaged Major Henry Lee, who was stationed with his dragoons on the lines, to probe the matter through secret agents in New York. The result proved the utter falsehood of these insinuations.

At the time of making this inquiry, a plan was formed at Washington's suggestion to get possession of the person of Arnold. The agent pitched upon by Lee for the purpose, was the sergeant-major of cavalry in his legion, John Champe by name, a young Virginian about twenty-four years of age, whom he describes as being rather above the middle size — full of bone and muscle; with a saturnine countenance, grave, thoughtful, and taciturn, of tried loyalty and inflexible courage. By many promises and much persuasion, Lee brought him to engage in the attempt. "I have incited his thirst for fame," writes he, "by impressing on his mind the virtue and glory of the act."

Champe was to make a pretended desertion to the enemy at New York. There he was to enlist in a corps which Arnold was raising, insinuate himself into some menial or military situation about his person, and, watching for a favorable moment, was, with the aid of a confederate from Newark, to seize him in the night, gag him, and bring him across the Hudson into Bergen woods, in the Jerseys.

Washington, in approving the plan, enjoined and stipulated that Arnold should be brought to him alive. "No circumstance whatever," said he, "shall obtain my consent to his being put to death. The idea which would accompany such an event, would be, that ruffians had been hired to assassinate him. My aim is to make a public example of him, and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off."

The pretended desertion of the sergeant took place on the night of October 20, and was attended with difficulties. He had to evade patrols of horse and foot, beside stationary guards and irregular scouting parties. Major Lee could render him no assistance other than to delay pursuit, should his departure be discovered. About eleven o'clock the sergeant took his cloak, valise, and orderly book, drew his horse from the picket, and mounting, set out on his hazardous course, while the major retired to rest.

He had not been in bed half an hour, when Captain Carnes, officer of the day, hurrying into his quarters, gave word that one of the patrols had fallen in with a dragoon, who, on being challenged, put spurs to his horse, and escaped. Lee pretended to be annoyed by the intrusion, and to believe that the pretended dragoon was some countryman of the neighborhood. The captain was piqued; made a muster of the dragoons, and returned with word that the sergeant-major was missing, who had gone off with horse, baggage, arms, and orderly book.

Lee was now compelled to order out a party in pursuit under Cornet Middleton, but in so doing, he contrived so many delays, that, by the time they were in the saddle, Champe had an hour's start. His pursuers, too, were obliged in the course of the night, to halt occasionally, dismount and examine the road, to guide themselves by the horse's track. At daybreak they pressed forward more rapidly, and from the summit of a hill descried Champe, not more than half a mile in front. The sergeant at the same moment caught sight of his pursuers, and now the chase became desperate. Champe had originally intended to make for Paulus Hook, but changed his course, threw his pursuers at fault, and succeeded in getting abreast of two British galleys at anchor near the shore beyond Bergen. He had no time to lose. Cornet Middleton was but two or three hundred yards behind him. Throwing himself off his horse, and running through a marsh, he plunged into the river, and called to the galleys for help. A boat was sent to his assistance, and he was conveyed on board of one of those vessels.

For a time the whole plan promised to be successful. Champe enlisted in Arnold's corps; was employed about his person; and every arrangement was made to surprise him at night in a garden in the rear of his quarters, convey him to a boat, and ferry him across the Hudson. On the appointed night, Lee, with three dragoons and three led horses, was in the woods of Hoboken, on the Jersey shore, waiting to receive the captive. Hour after hour passed away, — no boat approached, — day broke; and the major, with his led horses, returned perplexed and disappointed to the camp.

Washington was extremely chagrined at the issue of the undertaking, fearing that the sergeant had been detected in the last scene of his perilous and difficult enterprise. It subsequently proved, that on the day preceding the night fixed on for the capture, Arnold had removed his quarters to another part of the town, to superintend the embarkation of troops,

preparing (as was rumored) for an expedition to be directed by himself, and that the American legion, consisting chiefly of American deserters, had been transferred from their barracks to one of the transports. Among the troops thus transferred was John Champe; nor was he able for a long time to effect his escape, and resume his real character of a loyal and patriotic soldier. He was rewarded when he did so, by the munificence of the commander-in-chief, and the admiration of his old comrades in arms; having so nobly braved, in his country's cause, not merely danger, but a long course of obloquy.

We have here to note the altered fortunes of the once prosperous General Gates. His late defeat at Camden had withered the laurels snatched at Saratoga. As in the one instance he had received exaggerated praise, so in the other, he suffered undue censure. The sudden annihilation of an army from which so much had been expected, and the retreat of the general before the field was absolutely lost, appeared to demand a strict investigation. Congress therefore passed a resolution (October 5), requiring Washington to order a court of inquiry into the conduct of Gates as commander of the Southern army, and to appoint some other officer to the command until the inquiry should be made. Washington at once selected Greene for the important trust, the well-tried officer whom he would originally have chosen, had his opinion been consulted, when Congress so unadvisedly gave the command to Gates. In the present instance his choice was in concurrence with the expressed wishes of the delegates of the three Southern States, conveyed to him by one of their number.

Washington's letter of instructions to Greene (October 22) showed the implicit confidence he reposed in the abilities and integrity of that excellent officer. "Uninformed as I am," writes he, "of the enemy's force in that quarter, of our own, or of the resources which it will be in our power to command, for carrying on the war, I can give you no particular instructions, but must leave you to govern yourself entirely according to your own prudence and judgment, and the circumstances in which you find yourself. I am aware that the nature of the command will offer you embarrassments of a singular and complicated nature, but I rely upon your abilities and exertions for every thing your means will enable you to effect."

With regard to the court of inquiry, it was to be conducted in the quarter in which Gates had acted, where all the witnesses were, and where alone the requisite information could be obtained. Baron Steuben, who was to accompany Greene

to the South, was to preside, and the members of the court were to be such general and field officers of the Continental troops as were not present at the battle of Camden, or, having been present, were not wanted as witnesses, or were persons to whom General Gates had no objection. The affair was to be conducted with the greatest impartiality, and with as much despatch as circumstances would permit.

Washington concludes his letter of instructions to Greene, with expressions dictated by friendship as well as official duty. "You will keep me constantly advised of the state of your affairs, and of every material occurrence. My warmest wishes for your success, reputation, health and happiness accompany you."

Ravaging incursions from Canada had harassed the northern parts of the State of New York of late, and laid desolate some parts of the country from which Washington had hoped to receive great supplies of flour for the armies. Major Carleton, a nephew of Sir Guy, at the head of a motley force, European, tory, and Indian, had captured Forts Anne and George. Sir John Johnson also, with Joseph Brant, and a mongrel, half-savage crew, had laid waste the fertile region of the Mohawk River, and burned the villages of Schoharie and Caughnawaga. The greatest alarm prevailed throughout the neighboring country. Governor Clinton himself took the field at the head of the militia, but before he arrived at the scene of mischief, the marauders had been encountered and driven back by General Van Rensselaer and the militia of those parts; not, however, until they had nearly destroyed the settlements on the Mohawk. Washington now put Brigadier-General James Clinton (the governor's brother) in command of the Northern department.

The state of the army was growing more and more a subject of solicitude to the commander-in-chief. He felt weary of struggling on, with such scanty means, and such a vast responsibility. The campaign, which, at its commencement, had seemed pregnant with favorable events, had proved sterile and inactive, and was drawing to a close. The short terms for which most of the troops were enlisted must soon expire, and then the present army would be reduced to a mere shadow. The saddened state of his mind may be judged from his letters. An ample one addressed to General Sullivan, fully lays open his feelings and his difficulties. "I had hoped," writes he, "but hoped in vain, that a prospect was displaying which would enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life. The favorable disposition of Spain: the promised succor from France; the combined force in the West

Indies ; the declaration of Russia (acceded to by other governments of Europe, and humiliating to the naval pride and power of Great Britain) ; the superiority of France and Spain by sea in Europe ; the Irish claims and English disturbances, formed, in the aggregate, an opinion in my breast, which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams, that the hour of deliverance was not far distant ; since, however unwilling Great Britain might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But, alas ! these prospects, flattering as they were, have proved delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress.

“ We have been half our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines nor money to form them ; and in a little time we shall have no men, if we have no money to pay them. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system and economy. It is in vain, however, to look back, nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers. But to suppose that this great Revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by State supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is in my opinion absurd, and as unreasonable as to expect an inversion in the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views. If it was necessary, it could be proved to any person of a moderate understanding, that an annual army, raised on the spur of the occasion, besides being unqualified for the end designed, is, in various ways which could be enumerated, ten times more expensive than a permanent body of men under good organization and military discipline, which never was nor ever will be the case with new troops. A thousand arguments resulting from experience and the nature of things, might also be adduced to prove that the army, if it is dependent upon State supplies, must disband or starve, and that taxation alone, especially at this late hour, cannot furnish the means to carry on the war.”<sup>1</sup>

We will here add, that the repeated and elaborate reasonings of Washington, backed by dear-bought experience, slowly brought Congress to adopt a system suggested by him for the organization and support of the army, according to which, troops were to be enlisted to serve throughout the war, and all officers who continued in service until the return of peace were to receive half pay during life.

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<sup>1</sup> Writings of Washington, vii. 228.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE MARQUIS LAFAYETTE AND HIS LIGHT INFANTRY — PROPOSES A BRILLIANT STROKE — PREPARATIONS FOR AN ATTACK ON THE BRITISH POST ON NEW YORK ISLAND — VISIT OF THE MARQUIS OF CHASTELLUX TO THE AMERICAN CAMP — WASHINGTON AT HEAD-QUARTERS — ATTACK OF THE BRITISH POSTS GIVEN UP — STARK FORAGES WESTCHESTER COUNTY — EXPLOIT OF TALLMADGE ON LONG ISLAND.

THE Marquis Lafayette at this time commanded the advance guard of Washington's army, composed of six battalions of light infantry. They were better clad than the other soldiery; in trim uniforms, leathern helmets, with crests of horse-hair. The officers were armed with spontoons, the non-commissioned officers with fusees; both with short sabres which the marquis had brought from France, and presented to them. He was proud of his troops, and had a young man's ardor for active service. The inactivity which had prevailed for some time past was intolerable to him. To satisfy his impatient longing, Washington had permitted him in the beginning of October to attempt a descent at night on Staten Island, to surprise two Hessian encampments. It had fallen through for want of boats, and other requisites, but he saw enough, he said, to convince him that the Americans were altogether fitted for such enterprises.<sup>1</sup>

The marquis saw with repining the campaign drawing to a close, and nothing done that would rouse the people in America, and be spoken of at the Court of Versailles. He was urgent with Washington that the campaign should be terminated by some brilliant stroke. "Any enterprise," writes he, "will please the people of this country, and show them that we do not mean to remain idle when we have men; even a defeat, provided it were not disastrous, would have its good effect."

Complaints, he hinted, had been made in France of the prevailing inactivity. "If any thing could decide the ministry to yield us the succor demanded," writes he, "it would be our giving the nation a proof that we are ready."

The brilliant stroke, suggested with some detail by the marquis, was a general attack upon Fort Washington, and the

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<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs de Lafayette*, T. 1, p. 337.



other posts at the north end of the island of New York, and, under certain circumstances, which he specified, *make a push for the city.*

Washington regarded the project of his young and ardent friend with a more sober and cautious eye. "It is impossible, my dear marquis," replies he, "to desire more ardently than I do to terminate the campaign by some happy stroke; but we must consult our means rather than our wishes, and not endeavor to better our affairs by attempting things, which for want of success may make them worse. We are to lament that there has been a misapprehension of our circumstances in Europe; but to endeavor to recover our reputation, we should take care that we do not injure it more. Ever since it became evident that the allied arms could not co-operate this campaign, I have had an eye to the point you mention, determined, if a favorable opening should offer, to embrace it: but, so far as my information goes, the enterprise would not be warranted. It would, in my opinion, be imprudent to throw an army of ten thousand men upon an island, against nine thousand, exclusive of seamen and militia. This, from the accounts we have, appears to be the enemy's force. All we can do at present, therefore, is to endeavor to gain a more certain knowledge of their situation, and act accordingly."

The British posts in question were accordingly reconnoitred from the opposite banks of the Hudson, by Colonel Gouvion, an able French engineer. Preparations were made to carry the scheme into effect, should it be determined upon, in which case Lafayette was to lead the attack at the head of his light troops, and be supported by Washington with his main force; while a strong foraging party sent by General Heath from West Point to White Plains in Westchester County, to draw the attention of the enemy in that direction, and mask the real design, was, on preconcerted signals, to advance rapidly to King's Bridge, and co-operate.

Washington's own officers were kept in ignorance of the ultimate object of the preparatory movements. "Never," writes his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, "never was a plan better arranged, and never did circumstances promise more sure or complete success. The British were not only unalarmed, but our own troops were misguided in their operations." As the plan was not carried into effect, we have forborne to give many of its details.

At this juncture, the Marquis de Chastellux arrived in camp. He was on a tour of curiosity, while the French troops at Rhode

Island were in winter quarters, and came on the invitation of his relative, the **Marquis Lafayette**, who was to present him to Washington. In after years he published an account of his tour, in which we have graphic sketches of the camp and the commanders. He arrived with his aides-de-camp on the afternoon of November 23, and sought the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief. They were in a large farm-house. There was a spacious tent in the yard before it for the general, and several smaller tents in an adjacent field for his guards. Baggage wagons were arranged about for the transportation of the general's effects, and a number of grooms were attending to very fine horses belonging to general officers and their aides-de-camp. Every thing was in perfect order. As De Chastellux rode up, he observed Lafayette in front of the house, conversing with an officer, tall of stature, with a mild and noble countenance. It was Washington. De Chastellux alighted and was presented by Lafayette. His reception was frank and cordial. Washington conducted him into the house. Dinner was over, but Generals Knox, Wayne, and Howe, and Colonels Hamilton, Tilghman, and other officers, were still seated round the board. Washington introduced De Chastellux to them, and ordered a repast for the former and his aides-de-camp: all remained at table, and a few glasses of claret and Madeira promoted sociability. The marquis soon found himself at his ease with Washington. "The goodness and benevolence which characterize him," observes he, "are felt by all around him; but the confidence he inspires is never familiar; it springs from a profound esteem for his virtues, and a great opinion of his talents."

In the evening, after the guests had retired, Washington conducted the marquis to a chamber prepared for him and his aides-de-camp, apologizing with nobly frank and simple politeness, that his scanty quarters did not afford more spacious accommodation.

The next morning, horses were led up after breakfast; they were to review the troops and visit Lafayette's encampment, seven miles distant. The horses which De Chastellux and Washington rode, had been presented to the latter by the State of Virginia. There were fine blood horses also for the aides-de camp. "Washington's horses," writes De Chastellux, "are as good as they are beautiful, and all perfectly trained. He trains them all himself. He is a very good and a very hardy cavalier, leaping the highest barriers, and riding very fast, without rising in the stirrups, bearing on the bridle, or suffering his horse to run as if wild.

In the camp of artillery where General Knox received them, the marquis found every thing in perfect order, and conducted in the European style. Washington apologized for no salute being fired. Detachments were in movement at a distance, in the plan of operations, and the booming of guns might give an alarm, or be mistaken for signals.

Incessant and increasing rain obliged Washington to make but a short visit to Lafayette's camp, whence, putting spurs to his horse, he conducted his French visitors back to headquarters on as fast a gallop as bad roads would permit.

There were twenty guests at table that day at head-quarters. The dinner was in the English style, large dishes of butcher's meat and poultry, with different kinds of vegetables, followed by pies and puddings and a dessert of apples and hickory nuts. Washington's fondness for the latter was noticed by the marquis, and indeed was often a subject of remark. He would sit picking them by the hour after dinner, as he sipped his wine and conversed.

One of the general's aides-de-camp sat by him at the end of the table, according to custom, to carve the dishes and circulate the wine. Healths were drunk and toasts were given; the latter were sometimes given by the general through his aide-de-camp. The conversation was tranquil and pleasant. Washington willingly entered into some details about the principal operations of the war, "but always," says the marquis, "with a modesty and conciseness, which proved sufficiently that it was out of pure complaisance that he consented to talk about himself."

Wayne was pronounced agreeable and animated in conversation, and possessed of wit; but Knox, with his genial aspect and cordial manners, seems to have won De Chastellux's heart. "He is thirty-five years of age," writes he, "very stout but very active; a man of talent and intelligence, amiable, gay, sincere and loyal. It is impossible to know him without esteeming him, and to see him without loving him."

It was about half-past seven when the company rose from the table, shortly after which, those who were not of the household departed. There was a light supper of three or four dishes, with fruit, and abundance of hickory nuts; the cloth was soon removed; Bordeaux and Madeira wine were placed upon the table, and conversation went on. Colonel Hamilton was the aide-de-camp who officiated, and announced the toasts as they occurred. "It is customary," writes the marquis, "towards the end of the supper to call upon each one for a *sentiment*, that is to say, the name of some lady to whom he is

attached by some sentiment either of love, friendship, or simple preference."

It is evident there was extra gayety at the table of the commander-in-chief during this visit, in compliment to his French guests; but we are told, that gay conversation often prevailed at the dinners at head-quarters among the aides-de-camp and young officers, in which Washington took little part, though a quiet smile would show that he enjoyed it.

We have been tempted to quote freely the remarks of De Chastellux, as they are those of a cultivated man of society, whose position and experience made him a competent judge, and who had an opportunity of observing Washington in a familiar point of view.

Speaking of his personal appearance, he writes: "His form is noble and elevated, well-shaped and exactly proportioned; his physiognomy mild and agreeable, but such, that one does not speak in particular of any one of his traits; and that in quitting him there remains simply the recollection of a fine countenance. His air is neither grave nor familiar; one sees sometimes on his forehead the marks of thought, but never of inquietude; while inspiring respect he inspires confidence, and his smile is always that of benevolence.

"Above all, it is interesting," continues the marquis, "to see him in the midst of the general officers of his army. General in a republic, he has not the imposing state of a marshal of France who gives the *order*; hero in a republic, he excites a different sort of respect, which seems to originate in this sole idea, that the welfare of each individual is attached to his person."

He sums up his character in these words: "Brave without temerity; laborious without ambition; generous without prodigality; noble without pride; virtuous without severity; he seems always to stop short of that limit, where the virtues, assuming colors more vivid, but more changeable and dubious, might be taken for defects."

During the time of this visit of the marquis to head-quarters, news was received of the unexpected and accidental appearance of several British armed vessels in the Hudson; the effect was to disconcert the complicated plan of a coup-de-main upon the British posts, and, finally, to cause it to be abandoned.

Some parts of the scheme were attended with success. The veteran Stark, with a detachment of twenty-five hundred men, made an extensive forage in Westchester County, and Major Tallmadge with eighty men, chiefly dismounted dragoons of

Sheldon's regiment, crossed in boats from the Connecticut shore to Long Island, where the Sound was twenty miles wide; traversed the island on the 22d of November, surprised Fort George at Coram, captured the garrison of fifty-two men, demolished the fort, set fire to magazines of forage, and recrossed the Sound to Fairfield, without the loss of a man: an achievement which drew forth a high eulogium from Congress.

At the end of November the army went into winter quarters; the Pennsylvania line in the neighborhood of Morristown, the Jersey line about Pompton, the New England troops at West Point, and the other posts of the Highlands; and the New York line was stationed at Albany, to guard against any invasion from Canada.

The French army remained stationed at Newport, expecting the Duke of Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon in Connecticut. Washington's head-quarters were established at New Windsor, on the Hudson.

We will now turn to the South to note the course of affairs in that quarter during the last few months.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

RIGOROUS MEASURES OF CORNWALLIS IN SOUTH CAROLINA — FERGUSON SENT TO SCOUR THE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY BETWEEN THE CATAWBA AND THE YADKIN — CORNWALLIS IN A HORNET'S NEST — MOVEMENTS OF FERGUSON — MOUNTAIN MEN AND FIERCE MEN FROM KENTUCKY — BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN — RETROGRADE MARCH OF CORNWALLIS.

CORNWALLIS having, as he supposed, entirely crushed the "rebel cause" in South Carolina, by the defeats of Gates and Sumter, remained for some time at Camden, detained by the excessive heat of the weather and the sickness of part of his troops, broken down by the hardships of campaigning under a Southern sun. He awaited also supplies and re-enforcements.

Immediately after the victory at Camden, he had ordered the friends to royalty in North Carolina "to arm and intercept the beaten army of General Gates," promising that he would march directly to the borders of that province in their support; he now detached Major Patrick Ferguson to its western confines, to keep the war alive in that quarter. This resolute partisan had with him his own corps of light infantry, and a

body of royalist militia of his own training. His whole force was between eleven and twelve hundred men, noted for activity and alertness, and unencumbered with baggage or artillery.

His orders were to skirt the mountain country between the Catawba and the Yadkin, harass the whigs, inspirit the tories, and embody the militia under the royal banner. This done, he was to repair to Charlotte, the capital of Mecklenburg County, where he would find Lord Cornwallis, who intended to make it his rendezvous. Should he, however, in the course of his tour, be threatened by a superior force, he was immediately to return to the main army. No great opposition, however, was apprehended, the Americans being considered totally broken up and dispirited.

During the suspense of his active operations in the field, Cornwallis instituted rigorous measures against Americans who continued under arms, or, by any other acts, manifested what he termed "a desperate perseverance in opposing His Majesty's Government." Among these were included many who had taken refuge in North Carolina. A commissioner was appointed to take possession of their estates and property; of the annual product of which a part was to be allowed for the support of their families, the residue to be applied to the maintenance of the war. Letters from several of the principal inhabitants of Charleston having been found in the baggage of the captured American generals, the former were accused of breaking their parole, and holding a treasonable correspondence with the armed enemies of England; they were in consequence confined on board of prison ships, and afterwards transported to St. Augustine in Florida.

Among the prisoners taken in the late combats, many, it was discovered, had British protections in their pockets; these were deemed arrant runagates, amenable to the penalties of the proclamation issued by Sir Henry Clinton on the 3d of June; they were therefore led forth from the provost and hanged, almost without the form of an inquiry.

These measures certainly were not in keeping with the character for moderation and benevolence usually given to Lord Cornwallis; but they accorded with the rancorous spirit manifested towards each other both by whigs and tories in Southern warfare. If they were intended by his lordship as measures of policy, their effect was far different from what he anticipated; opposition was exasperated into deadly hate, and a cry of vengeance was raised throughout the land. Cornwallis decamped from Camden, and set out for North Carolina. In the subjuga-

tion of that province, he counted on the co-operation of the troops which Sir Henry Clinton was to send to the lower part of Virginia, which, after reducing the Virginians to obedience, were to join his lordship's standard on the confines of North Carolina.

Advancing into the latter province, Cornwallis took post at Charlotte, where he had given rendezvous to Ferguson. Mecklenburg, of which this was the capital, was, as the reader may recollect, the "heady, high-minded" country, where the first declaration of independence had been made, and his lordship from uncomfortable experience soon pronounced Charlotte "the Hornet's Nest of North Carolina."

The surrounding country was wild and rugged, covered with close and thick woods, and crossed in every direction by narrow roads. All attempts at foraging were worse than useless. The plantations were small and afforded scanty supplies. The inhabitants were stanch whigs, with the pugnacious spirit of the old Covenanters. Instead of remaining at home and receiving the king's money in exchange for their produce, they turned out with their rifles, stationed themselves in covert places, and fired upon the foraging parties; convoys of provisions from Camden had to fight their way, and expresses were shot down and their despatches seized.

The capture of his expresses was a sore annoyance to Cornwallis, depriving him of all intelligence concerning the movements of Colonel Ferguson, whose arrival he was anxiously awaiting. The expedition of that doughty partisan officer here calls for especial notice. He had been chosen for this military tour as being calculated to gain friends by his conciliating disposition and manners, and his address to the people of the country was in that spirit: "We come not to make war upon women and children, but to give them money and relieve their distresses." Ferguson, however, had a loyal hatred of whigs, and to his standard flocked many rancorous tories, besides outlaws and desperadoes, so that with all his conciliating intentions, his progress through the country was attended by many exasperating excesses.

He was on his way to join Cornwallis when a chance for a signal exploit presented itself. An American force under Colonel Elijah Clarke, of Georgia, was retreating to the mountain districts of North Carolina, after an unsuccessful attack upon the British post at Augusta. Ferguson resolved to cut off their retreat. Turning towards the mountains, he made his way through a rugged wilderness and took post at Gilbert-

town, a small frontier village of log-houses. He was encouraged to this step, say the British chroniclers, by the persuasion that there was no force in that part of the country able to look him in the face. He had no idea that the marauds of his followers had arrayed the very wilderness against him. "All of a sudden," say the chroniclers just cited, "a numerous, fierce and unexpected enemy sprung up in the depths of the desert. The scattered inhabitants of the mountains assembled without noise or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of six hundred strong, daring, well-mounted and excellent horsemen."<sup>1</sup>

These, in fact, were the people of the mountains which form the frontiers of the Carolinas and Georgia, "mountain men," as they were commonly called, a hardy race, half huntsmen, half herdsmen, inhabiting deep narrow valleys, and fertile slopes, adapted to grazing, watered by the coldest of springs and brightest of streams, and embosomed in mighty forest trees. Being subject to inroads and surprisals from the Chickasaws, Cherokees and Creeks, a tacit league existed among them for mutual defence, and it only needed, as in the present instance, an alarm to be circulated through their settlements by swift messengers to bring them at once to the point of danger. Beside these, there were other elements of war suddenly gathering in Ferguson's vicinity. A band of what were termed "the wild and fierce" inhabitants of Kentucky, with men from other settlements west of the Alleganies, had crossed the mountains, led by Colonels Campbell and Boone, to pounce upon a quantity of Indian goods at Augusta; but had pulled up on hearing of the repulse of Clarke. The stout yeomen, also, of the district of Ninety-Six, roused by the marauds of Ferguson, had taken the field, under the conduct of Colonel James Williams, of Granville County. Here, too, were hard-riders and sharp-shooters, from Holston River, Powel's Valley, Botetourt, Fincastle, and other parts of Virginia, commanded by Colonels Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby and Sevier. Such were the different bodies of mountaineers and backwoodsmen, suddenly drawing together from various parts to the number of three thousand.

Threatened by a force so superior in number and fierce in hostility, Ferguson issued an address to rouse the tories. "The Backwater men have crossed the mountain," said he, "McDowell, Hampton, Shelby and Cleveland are at their head.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Register, 1781, p. 62.



If you choose to be trodden upon forever and by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let women look out for real men to protect them. If you desire to live and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp."

The taunting appeal produced but little effect. In this exigency, Ferguson remembered the instructions of Cornwallis, that he should rejoin him should he find himself threatened by a superior force; breaking up his quarters, therefore, he pushed for the British army, sending messengers ahead to apprise his lordship of his danger. Unfortunately for him, his missives were intercepted.

Gilbert-town had not long been vacated by Ferguson and his troops, when the motley host we have described thronged in. Some were on foot, but the greater part on horseback. Some were in homespun garb; but the most part in hunting-shirts, occasionally decorated with colored fringe and tassels. Each man had his long rifle and hunting-knife, his wallet, or knapsack and blanket, and either a buck's tail or sprig of evergreen in his hat. Here and there an officer appeared in the Continental uniform of blue and buff, but most preferred the half-Indian hunting-dress. There was neither tent nor tent equipage, neither baggage nor baggage wagon to encumber the movements of that extemporaneous host. Prompt warriors of the wilderness, with them it was "seize the weapon—spring into the saddle—and away!" In going into action, it was their practice to dismount, tie their horses to the branches of trees, or secure them in some other way, so as to be at hand for use when the battle was over, either to pursue a flying enemy, or make their own escape by dint of hoof.

There was a clamor of tongues for a time at Gilbert-town; groups on horseback and foot in every part, holding hasty council. Being told that Ferguson had retreated by the Cherokee road towards North Carolina, about nine hundred of the hardiest and best mounted set out in urgent pursuit; leaving those who were on foot or weakly mounted, to follow on as fast as possible. Colonel William Campbell, of Virginia, having come from the greatest distance, was allowed to have command of the whole party; there was not much order nor subordination. Each colonel led his own men in his own way.

In the evening they arrived at the Cowpens, a grazing neighborhood. Here two beeves were killed and given to be cut up, cooked and eaten as quick as possible. Before those who were slow or negligent had half prepared their repast, marching orders were given, and all were again in the saddle. A rapid

and irregular march was kept up all night in murky darkness and through a heavy rain. About daybreak they crossed Broad River, where an attack was apprehended. Not finding the enemy, they halted, lit their fires, made their morning's meal, and took a brief repose. By nine o'clock they were again on the march. The rainy night had been succeeded by a bright October morning, and all were in high spirits. Ferguson, they learnt, had taken the road toward King's Mountain, about twelve miles distant. When within three miles of it their scouts brought in word that he had taken post on its summit. The officers now held a short consultation on horseback, and then proceeded. The position taken by Ferguson was a strong one. King's Mountain rises out of a broken country, and is detached, on the north, from inferior heights by a deep valley, so as to resemble an insulated promontory about half a mile in length, with sloping sides, excepting on the north. The mountain was covered for the most part with lofty forest trees, free from underwood, interspersed with boulders and masses of gray rock. The forest was sufficiently open to give free passage to horsemen.

As the Americans drew nearer, they could occasionally, through openings of the woodland, descry the glittering of arms along a level ridge, forming the crest of King's Mountain. This, Ferguson had made his stronghold; boasting that "if all the rebels out of hell should attack him, they would not drive him from it."

Dismounting at a small stream which runs through a ravine, the Americans picketed their horses or tied them to the branches of the trees, and gave them in charge of a small guard. They then formed themselves into three divisions of nearly equal size, and prepared to storm the heights on three sides. Campbell, seconded by Shelby, was to lead the centre division; Sevier with McDowell the right, and Cleveland and Williams the left. The divisions were to scale the mountain as nearly as possible at the same time. The fighting directions were in frontier style. When once in action, every one must act for himself. The men were not to wait for the word of command, but to take good aim and fire as fast as possible. When they could no longer hold their ground, they were to get behind trees, or retreat a little, and return to the fight, but never to go quite off.

Campbell allowed time for the flanking divisions to move to the right and left along the base of the mountain, and take their proper distances; he then pushed up in front with the

centre division, he and Shelby, each at the head of his men. The first firing was about four o'clock, when a picket was driven in by Cleveland and Williams on the left, and pursued up the mountain. Campbell soon arrived within rifle distance of the crest of the mountain, whence a sheeted fire of musketry was opened upon him. He instantly deployed his men, posted them behind trees, and returned the fire with deadly effect.

Ferguson, exasperated at being thus hunted into this mountain fastness, had been chafing in his rocky lair and meditating a furious sally. He now rushed out with his regulars, made an impetuous charge with the bayonet, and dislodging his assailants from their coverts, began to drive them down the mountain, they not having a bayonet among them. He had not proceeded far, when a flanking fire was opened by one of the other divisions; facing about and attacking this he was again successful, when a third fire was opened from another quarter. Thus, as fast as one division gave way before the bayonet, another came to its relief; while those who had given way rallied and returned to the charge. The nature of the fighting ground was more favorable to the rifle than the bayonet, and this was a kind of warfare in which the frontier men were at home. The elevated position of the enemy also was in favor of the Americans, securing them from the danger of their own cross-fire. Ferguson found that he was completely in the hunter's toils, beset on every side; but he stood bravely at bay, until the ground around him was strewn with the killed and wounded, picked off by the fatal rifle. His men were at length broken, and retreated in confusion along the ridge. He galloped from place to place endeavoring to rally them, when a rifle ball brought him to the ground, and his white horse was seen careering down the mountain without a rider.

This closed the bloody fight; for Ferguson's second in command, seeing all further resistance hopeless, hoisted a white flag, beat a parley and sued for quarters. One hundred and fifty of the enemy had fallen and as many been wounded; while of the Americans, but twenty were killed, though a considerable number were wounded. Among those slain was Colonel James Williams, who had commanded the troops of Ninety-Six, and proved himself one of the most daring of the partisan leaders.

Eight hundred and ten men were taken prisoners, one hundred of whom were regulars, the rest royalists. The rancor awakened by civil war was shown in the treatment of some of

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the prisoners. A court-martial was held the day after the battle, and a number of tory prisoners who had been bitter in their hostility to the American cause, and flagitious in their persecution of their countrymen, were hanged. This was to revenge the death of American prisoners hanged at Camden and elsewhere.

The army of mountaineers and frontier men, thus fortuitously congregated, did not attempt to follow up their signal blow. They had no general scheme, no plan of campaign; it was the spontaneous rising of the sons of the soil, to revenge it on its invaders, and, having effected their purpose, they returned in triumph to their homes. They were little aware of the importance of their achievement. The battle of King's Mountain, inconsiderable as it was in the numbers engaged, turned the tide of Southern warfare. The destruction of Ferguson and his corps gave a complete check to the expedition of Cornwallis. He began to fear for the safety of South Carolina, liable to such sudden eruptions from the mountains; lest, while he was facing to the north, these hordes of stark-riding warriors might throw themselves behind him, and produce a popular combustion in the province he had left. He resolved, therefore, to return with all speed to that province and provide for its security.

On the 14th of October he commenced his retrograde and mortifying march, conducting it in the night, and with such hurry and confusion, that nearly twenty wagons, laden with baggage and supplies, were lost. As he proceeded, the rainy season set in; the brooks and rivers became swollen, and almost impassable; the roads deep and miry; provisions and forage scanty; the troops generally sickly, having no tents. Lord Cornwallis himself was seized with a bilious fever, which obliged him to halt two days in the Catawba settlement, and afterwards to be conveyed in a wagon, giving up the command to Lord Rawdon.

In the course of this desolate march, the British suffered as usual from the vengeance of an outraged country, being fired upon from behind trees and other coverts by the yeomanry; their sentries shot down at their encampments; their foraging parties cut off. "The enemy," writes Lord Rawdon, "are mostly mounted militia, not to be overtaken by our infantry, nor to be safely pursued in this strong country by our cavalry."

For two weeks were they toiling on this retrograde march, through deep roads, and a country cut up by water-courses, with the very elements arrayed against them. At length, after

fording the Catawba, where it was six hundred yards wide, and three and a half deep, and where a handful of riflemen might have held them in check, the army arrived at Winnsborough, in South Carolina. Hence, by order of Cornwallis, Lord Rawdon wrote on the 24th of October, to Brigadier-General Leslie, who was at that time in the Chesapeake, with the force detached by Sir Henry Clinton for a descent upon Virginia, suggesting the expediency of his advancing to North Carolina, for the purpose of co-operation with Cornwallis, who feared to proceed far from South Carolina, lest it should be again in insurrection.

In the mean time his lordship took post at Winnsborough. It was a central position, where he might cover the country from partisan incursions, obtain forage and supplies, and await the co-operation of General Leslie.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

MARION — HIS CHARACTER — BYE NAMES — HAUNTS — TARLETON IN QUEST OF HIM — SUMTER ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE SANTEE — HIS AFFAIR WITH TARLETON AT BLACK STOCK HILL — GATES AT HILLSBOROUGH — HIS DOMESTIC MISFORTUNES — ARRIVAL OF GREENE — HIS CONSIDERATE CONDUCT — GATES RETIRES TO HIS ESTATE — CONDITION OF THE ARMY — STRATAGEM OF COLONEL WASHINGTON AT CLERMONT — MORGAN DETACHED TO THE DISTRICT OF NINETY-SIX — GREENE POSTS HIMSELF ON THE PEDDEE.

THE victory at King's Mountain had set the partisan spirit throughout the country in a blaze. Francis Marion was soon in the field. He had been made a brigadier-general by Governor Rutledge, but his brigade, as it was called, was formed of neighbors and friends, and was continually fluctuating in numbers. He was nearly fifty years of age, and small of stature, but hardy, healthy and vigorous. Brave but not braggart, never avoiding danger, but never rashly seeking it. Taciturn and abstemious; a strict disciplinarian; careful of the lives of his men, but little mindful of his own life. Just in his dealings, free from every thing selfish or mercenary, and incapable of a meanness. He had his haunts and strongholds in the morasses of the Pedee and Black Rivers. His men were hardy and abstemious as himself; they ate their meat without salt, often subsisted on potatoes, were scantily clad, and almost destitute of blankets. Marion was full of stratagems and expe-

dients. Sallying forth from his morasses, he would overrun the lower districts, pass the Santee, beat up the small posts in the vicinity of Charleston, cut up the communication between that city and Camden; and having struck some signal blow, so as to rouse the vengeance of the enemy, would retreat again into his fenny fastnesses. Hence the British gave him the bye name of the *Swamp Fox*, but those of his countrymen who knew his courage, his loftiness of spirit and spotless integrity, considered him the *Bayard of the South*.

Tarleton, who was on duty in that part of the country, undertook, as he said, to draw the swamp fox from his cover. He accordingly marched cautiously down the east bank of the Wateree with a body of dragoons and infantry in compact order. The fox, however, kept close; he saw that the enemy was too strong for him. Tarleton now changed his plan. By day he broke up his force into small detachments or patrols, giving them orders to keep near enough to each other to render mutual support if attacked, and to gather together at night.

The artifice had its effect. Marion sallied forth from his cover just before daybreak to make an attack upon one of these detachments, when, to his surprise, he found himself close upon the British camp. Perceiving the snare that had been spread for him, he made a rapid retreat. A close pursuit took place. For seven hours Marion was hunted from one swamp and fastness to another; several stragglers of his band were captured, and Tarleton was in strong hope of bringing him into action, when an express came spurring from Cornwallis, calling for the immediate services of himself and his dragoons in another quarter.

Sumter was again in the field! That indefatigable partisan having recruited a strong party in the mountainous country, to which he retreated after his defeat on the Wateree, had reappeared on the west side of the Santee, repulsed a British party sent against him, killing its leader; then, crossing Broad River, had effected a junction with Colonels Clark and Brannan, and now menaced the British posts in the district of Ninety-Six.

It was to disperse this head of partisan war that Tarleton was called off from beleaguering Marion. Advancing with his accustomed celerity, he thought to surprise Sumter on the Enoree River. A deserter apprised the latter of his danger. He pushed across the river, but was hotly pursued, and his rear-guard roughly handled. He now made for the Tyger River, noted for turbulence and rapidity; once beyond this, he

might disband his followers in the woods. Tarleton, to prevent his passing it unmolested, spurred forward in advance of his main body with one hundred and seventy dragoons and eighty mounted men of the infantry. Before five o'clock (November 20) his advanced guard overtook and charged the rear of the Americans, who retreated to the main body. Sumter finding it impossible to cross Tyger River in safety, and being informed that the enemy, thus pressing upon him, were without infantry or cannon, took post on Black Stock Hill, with a rivulet and rail fence in front, the Tyger River in the rear and on the right flank, and a large log barn on the left. The barn was turned into a fortress, and a part of the force stationed in it to fire through the apertures between the logs.

Tarleton halted on an opposite height to await the arrival of his infantry, and part of his men dismounted to ease their horses. Sumter seized this moment for an attack. He was driven back after some sharp fighting. The enemy pursued, but were severely galled by the fire from the log barn. Enraged at seeing his men shot down, Tarleton charged with his cavalry, but found it impossible to dislodge the Americans from their rustic fortress. At the approach of night he fell back to join his infantry, leaving the ground strewn with his killed and wounded. The latter were treated with great humanity by Sumter. The loss of the Americans was only three killed and four wounded.

Sumter, who had received a severe wound in the breast, remained several hours on the field of action; but, understanding the enemy would be powerfully re-enforced in the morning, he crossed the Tyger River in the night. He was then placed on a litter between two horses, and thus conducted across the country by a few faithful adherents. The rest of his little army dispersed themselves through the woods. Tarleton, finding his enemy had disappeared, claimed the credit of a victory; but those who considered the affair rightly, declared that he had received a severe check.

While the attention of the enemy was thus engaged by the enterprises of Sumter and Marion and their swamp warriors, General Gates was gathering together the scattered fragments of his army at Hillsborough. When all were collected, his whole force, exclusive of militia, did not exceed fourteen hundred men. It was, as he said, "rather a shadow than a substance." His troops, disheartened by defeat, were in a forlorn state, without clothing, without pay, and sometimes without provisions. Destitute of tents, they constructed hovels of

fence-rails, poles, brush-wood, and the stalks of Indian-corn, the officers faring no better than the men.

The vanity of Gates was completely cut down by his late reverses. He had lost, too, the confidence of his officers, and was unable to maintain discipline among his men; who through their irregularities became a terror to the country people.

On the retreat of Cornwallis from Charlotte, Gates advanced to that place to make it his winter quarters. Huts were ordered to be built, and a regular encampment was commenced. Small-wood, with a body of militia, was stationed below on the Catawba to guard the road leading through Camden; and further down was posted Brigadier-General Morgan, with a corps of light troops.

To add to his depression of spirits, Gates received the melancholy intelligence of the death of an only son, and, while he was yet writhing under the blow, came official despatches informing him of his being superseded in command. A letter from Washington, we are told, accompanied them, sympathizing with him in his domestic misfortunes, adverting with peculiar delicacy to his reverses in battle, assuring him of his undiminished confidence in his zeal and capacity, and his readiness to give him the command of the left wing of his army as soon as he could make it convenient to join him.

The effect of this letter was overpowering. Gates was found walking about his room in the greatest agitation, pressing the letter to his lips, breaking forth into ejaculations of gratitude and admiration, and when he could find utterance to his thoughts, declared that its tender sympathy and considerate delicacy had conveyed more consolation and delight to his heart than he had believed it possible ever to have felt again.<sup>1</sup>

General Greene arrived at Charlotte, on the 2d of December. On his way from the North he had made arrangements for supplies from the different States; and had left the Baron Steuben in Virginia to defend that State and procure and send on re-enforcements and stores for the Southern army. On the day following his arrival, Greene took formal command. The delicacy with which he conducted himself towards his unfortunate predecessor is said to have been "edifying to the army." Consulting with his officers as to the court of inquiry on the conduct of General Gates, ordered by Congress; it was determined that there was not a sufficient number of general officers

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<sup>1</sup> Related by Dr. Wm. Reed, at that time superintendent of the Hospital department at Hillsborough, to Alex. Garden, aide-de-camp to Greene. — *Garden's Anecdotes*, p. 350.



in camp to sit upon it; that the state of General Gates's feelings, in consequence of the death of his son, disqualified him from entering upon the task of his defence; and that it would be indelicate in the extreme to press on him an investigation, which his honor would not permit him to defer. Besides, added Greene, his is a case of misfortune, and the most honorable course to be pursued, both with regard to General Gates and the government, is to make such representations as may obtain a revision of the order of Congress directing an inquiry into his conduct. In this opinion all present concurred.

Gates, in fact, when informed in the most delicate manner of the order of Congress, was urgent that a court of inquiry should be immediately convened: he acknowledged there was some important evidence that could not at present be procured; but he relied on the honor and justice of the court to make allowance for the deficiency. He was ultimately brought to acquiesce in the decision of the council of war for the postponement, but declared that he could not think of serving until the matter should have been properly investigated. He determined to pass the interim on his estate in Virginia. Greene, in a letter to Washington (December 7), writes: "General Gates sets out to-morrow for the northward. Many officers think very favorably of his conduct, and that, whenever an inquiry takes place, he will honorably acquit himself."

The kind and considerate conduct of Greene on the present occasion, completely subdued the heart of Gates. The coldness, if not ill-will, with which he had hitherto regarded him, was at an end, and, in all his subsequent correspondence with him, he addressed him in terms of affection.

We take pleasure in noting the generous conduct of the General Assembly of Virginia towards Gates. It was in session when he arrived at Richmond. "Those fathers of the commonwealth," writes Colonel H. Lee, in his Memoirs, "appointed a committee of their body to wait on the vanquished general, and assure him of their high regard and esteem, that their remembrance of his former glorious services was never to be obliterated by any reverse of fortune; but, ever mindful of his great merit, they would omit no opportunity of testifying to the world the gratitude which Virginia, as a member of the American Union, owed to him in his military character."

Gates was sensibly affected and comforted by this kind reception, and retired with a lightened heart to his farm in Berkeley County.

The whole force at Charlotte, when Greene took command,

did not much exceed twenty-three hundred men, and more than half of them were militia. It had been broken in spirit by the recent defeat. The officers had fallen into habits of negligence; the soldiers were loose and disorderly, without tents and camp equipage; badly clothed and fed, and prone to relieve their necessities by depredating upon the inhabitants. Greene's letters written at the time, abound with military aphorisms suggested by the squalid scene around him. "There must be either pride or principle," said he, "to make a soldier. No man will think himself bound to fight the battles of a State that leaves him perishing for want of covering; nor can you inspire a soldier with the sentiment of pride, while his situation renders him an object of pity, rather than of envy. Good feeding is the first principle of good service. It is impossible to preserve discipline where troops are in want of every thing — to attempt severity will only thin the ranks by a more hasty desertion."

The state of the country in which he was to act was equally discouraging. "It is so extensive," said he, "and the powers of government so weak, that everybody does as he pleases. The inhabitants are much divided in their political sentiments, and the whigs and tories pursue each other with little less than savage fury. The back country people are bold and daring; but the people upon the sea-shore are sickly, and but indifferent militia."

"War here," observes he in another letter, "is upon a very different scale to what it is at the Northward. It is a plain business there. The geography of the country reduces its operations to two or three points. But here it is everywhere; and the country is so full of deep rivers and impassable creeks and swamps, that you are always liable to misfortunes of a capital nature. The whigs and tories," adds he, "are continually out in small parties, and all the middle country is so disaffected that you cannot lay in the most trifling magazine, or send a wagon through the country with the least article of stores without a guard."

A recent exploit had given some animation to the troops. Lieutenant-Colonel Washington, detached with a troop of light horse to check a foraging party of the enemy, scoured the country within thirteen miles of Camden. Here he found a body of loyalist militia strongly posted at Clermont, the seat of Colonel Rugeley, their tory commander. They had ensconced themselves in a large barn, built of logs, and had fortified it by a slight intrenchment and a line of abatis. To attack it with

cavalry was useless. Colonel Washington dismounted part of his troops to appear like infantry ; placed on two wagon-wheels the trunk of a pine-tree, shaped and painted to look like a field-piece, brought it to bear upon the enemy, and, displaying his cavalry, sent in a flag summoning the garrison to surrender instantly, on pain of having their log castle battered about their ears. The garrison, to the number of one hundred and twelve men, with Colonel Rugeley at their head, gave themselves up prisoners of war.<sup>1</sup> Cornwallis, mentioning the ludicrous affair in a letter to Tarleton, adds sarcastically : " Rugeley will not be made a brigadier." The unlucky colonel never again appeared in arms.

The first care of General Greene was to reorganize his army. He went to work quietly but resolutely : called no councils of war ; communicated his plans and intentions to few, and such only as were able and willing to aid in executing them. " If I cannot inspire respect and confidence by an independent conduct," said he, " it will be impossible to instil discipline and order among the troops." His efforts were successful ; the army soon began to assume what he termed a military complexion.

He was equally studious to promote harmony among his officers, of whom a number were young, gallant, and intelligent. It was his delight to have them at his genial but simple table, where parade and restraint were banished, and pleasant and instructive conversation was promoted ; which, next to reading, was his great enjoyment. The manly benignity of his manners diffused itself round his board, and a common sentiment of affection for their chief united the young men in a kind of brotherhood.

Finding the country round Charlotte exhausted by repeated foragings, he separated the army into two divisions. One, about one thousand strong, was commanded by Brigadier-General Morgan, of rifle renown, and was composed of four hundred Continental infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Howard of the Maryland line, two companies of Virginia militia under Captains Triplet and Tate, and one hundred dragoons, under Lieutenant-Colonel Washington. With these Morgan was detached towards the district of Ninety-Six, in South Carolina, with orders to take a position near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad Rivers, and assemble the militia of the country. With the other division, Greene made a march of

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<sup>1</sup> Williams' Narrative.

toilful difficulty through a barren country with wagons and horses quite unfit for service, to Hicks' Creek, in Chesterfield district, on the east side of the Pedee River, opposite the Cheraw Hills. There he posted himself, on the 26th, partly to discourage the enemy from attempting to possess themselves of Cross Creek which would give them command of the greatest part of the provisions of the lower country — partly to form a camp of repose; "and no army," writes he, "ever wanted one more, the troops having totally lost their discipline."

"I will not pain your Excellency," writes he to Washington, "with further accounts of the wants and sufferings of this army; but I am not without great apprehension of its entire dissolution, unless the commissary's and quartermaster's departments can be rendered more competent to the demands of the service. Nor are the clothing and hospital departments upon a better footing. Not a shilling in the pay chest, nor a prospect of any for months to come. This is really making bricks without straw."

Governor Rutledge also wrote to Washington from Greene's camp, on the 28th of December, imploring aid for South Carolina. "Some of the stanch inhabitants of Charleston," writes he, "have been sent to St. Augustine, and others are to follow. The enemy have hanged many people, who, from fear, or the impracticability of removing, had received protections or given paroles, and from attachment to, had afterwards taken part with us. They have burnt a great number of houses, and turned many women, formerly of good fortune, with their children (whom their husbands or parents, from an unwillingness to join the enemy, had left) almost naked into the woods. Their cruelty and the distresses of the people are indeed beyond description. I entreat your Excellency, therefore, seriously to consider the unhappy state of South Carolina and Georgia; and I rely on your humanity and your knowledge of their importance to the Union, for such speedy and effectual support, as may compel the enemy to evacuate every part of these countries."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence of the Revolution, iii. 188.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOSTILE EMBARKATIONS TO THE SOUTH — ARNOLD IN COMMAND — NECESSITOUS STATE OF THE COUNTRY — WASHINGTON URGES A FOREIGN LOAN — MISSION OF COLONEL LAURENS TO FRANCE TO SEEK AID IN MEN AND MONEY — GRIEVANCES OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE — MUTINY — NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MUTINEERS — ARTICLES OF ACCOMMODATION — POLICY DOUBTED BY WASHINGTON — RIGOROUS COURSE ADOPTED BY HIM WITH OTHER MALCONTENTS — SUCCESSFUL — RATIFICATION OF THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION OF THE STATES.

THE occurrences recorded in the last few chapters made Washington apprehend a design on the part of the enemy to carry the stress of war into the Southern States. Conscious that he was the man to whom all looked in time of emergency, and who was, in a manner, responsible for the general course of military affairs, he deeply felt the actual impotency of his position.

In a letter to Franklin, who was minister-plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles, he strongly expresses his chagrin. "Disappointed at the second division of French troops, but more especially in the expected naval superiority, which was the pivot upon which every thing turned, we have been compelled to spend an inactive campaign, after a flattering prospect at the opening of it, and vigorous struggles to make it a decisive one on our part. Latterly, we have been obliged to become spectators of a succession of detachments from the army at New York in aid of Lord Cornwallis, while our naval weakness, and the political dissolution of a great part of our army, put it out of our power to counteract them at the southward, or to take advantage of them here."

The last of these detachments to the South took place on the 20th of December, but was not destined, as Washington had supposed, for Carolina. Sir Henry Clinton had received information that the troops already mentioned as being under General Leslie in the Chesapeake, had, by orders from Cornwallis, sailed for Charleston, to re-enforce his lordship; and this detachment was to take their place in Virginia. It was composed of British, German, and refugee troops, about seventeen hundred strong, and was commanded by Benedict Arnold, now a brigadier-general in his majesty's service. Sir Henry

Clinton, who distrusted the fidelity of the man he had corrupted, sent with him Colonels Dundas and Simcoe, experienced officers, by whose advice he was to be guided in every important measure. He was to make an incursion into Virginia, destroy the public magazines, assemble and arm the loyalists, and hold himself ready to co-operate with Lord Cornwallis. He embarked his troops in a fleet of small vessels, and departed on his enterprise animated by the rancorous spirit of a renegade, and prepared, as he vaunted, to give the Americans a blow "that would make the whole continent shake." We shall speak of his expedition hereafter.

As Washington beheld one hostile armament after another winging its way to the South, and received applications from that quarter for assistance which he had not the means to furnish, it became painfully apparent to him, that the efforts to carry on the war had exceeded the natural capabilities of the country. Its widely diffused population, and the composition and temper of some of its people, rendered it difficult to draw together its resources. Commerce was almost extinct; there was not sufficient natural wealth on which to found a revenue; paper currency had depreciated through want of funds for its redemption until it was nearly worthless. The mode of supplying the army by assessing a proportion of the productions of the earth, had proved ineffectual, oppressive, and productive of an alarming opposition. Domestic loans yielded but trifling assistance. The patience of the army was nearly exhausted; the people were dissatisfied with the mode of supporting the war, and there was reason to apprehend, that, under the pressure of impositions of a new and odious kind, they might imagine they had only exchanged one kind of tyranny for another.

We give but a few of many considerations which Washington was continually urging upon the attention of Congress in his full and perspicuous manner; the end of which was to enforce his opinion that a foreign loan was indispensably necessary to a continuance of the war.

His earnest counsels and entreaties were at length successful in determining Congress to seek aid both in men and money from abroad. Accordingly, on the 28th of December they commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel John Laurens, special minister at the court of Versailles, to apply for such aid. The situation he had held, as aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, had given him an opportunity of observing the course of affairs, and acquainting himself with the wants and resources of the

country; and he was instructed to confer with Washington, previous to his departure, as to the object of his mission. Not content with impressing him verbally with his policy, Washington gave him a letter of instruction for his government, and to be used as occasion might require. In this he advised him to solicit a loan sufficiently large to be a foundation for substantial arrangements of finance, to revive public credit, and give vigor to future operations; — next to a loan of money, a naval force was to be desired, sufficient to maintain a constant superiority on the American coast; also additional succor in troops. In a word, a means of co-operation by sea and land, with purse and sword, competent by a decided effort to attain, once for all, the great object of the alliance, the liberty and independence of the United States.

He was to show, at the same time, the ample means possessed by the nation to repay the loan, from its comparative freedom from debt, and its vast and valuable tracts of unsettled lands, the variety and fertility of its climates and soils, and its advantages of every kind for a lucrative commerce, and rapid increase of population and prosperity.

Scarce had Colonel Laurens been appointed to this mission, when a painful occurrence proved the urgent necessity of the required aid.

In the arrangement for winter quarters, the Pennsylvania line, consisting of six regiments, was huddled near Morristown. These troops had experienced the hardships and privations common to the whole army. General Wayne, who commanded them, had a soldier's sympathy in the sufferings of his men, and speaks of them in feeling language: "Poorly clothed, badly fed, and worse paid," writes he, "some of them not having received a paper dollar for near twelve months; exposed to winter's piercing cold, to drifting snows and chilling blasts, with no protection but old worn-out coats, tattered linen overalls, and but one blanket between three men. In this situation the enemy begin to work upon their passions, and have found means to circulate some proclamations among them. . . . The officers in general, as well as myself, find it necessary to stand for hours every day exposed to wind and weather among the poor naked fellows, while they are working at their huts and redoubts, often assisting with our own hands, in order to produce a conviction to their minds that we share, and more than share, every vicissitude in common with them; sometimes asking to participate their bread and water. The good effect of this conduct is very conspicuous, and prevents their murmuring

in public; but the delicate mind and eye of humanity are hurt, very much hurt, at their visible distress and private complainings."

How strongly is here depicted the trials to which the soldiers of the Revolution were continually subjected. But the Pennsylvania line had an additional grievance peculiar to themselves. Many of them had enlisted to serve "for three years, or during war," that is to say, for less than three years should the war cease in less time. When, however, having served for three years, they sought their discharge, the officers, loth to lose such experienced soldiers, interpreted the terms of enlistment to mean three years, or to the end of the war, should it continue for a longer time.

This chicanery naturally produced great exasperation. It was heightened by the conduct of a deputation from Pennsylvania, which, while it left veteran troops unpaid, distributed gold by handfuls among raw six-month levies, whose time was expiring, as bounties on their re-enlisting for the war.

The first day of the New Year arrived. The men were excited by an extra allowance of ardent spirits. In the evening, at a preconcerted signal, a great part of the Pennsylvania line, non-commissioned officers included, turned out under arms, declaring their intention to march to Philadelphia, and demand redress from Congress. Wayne endeavored to pacify them: they were no longer to be pacified by words. He cocked his pistols; in an instant their bayonets were at his breast. "We love, we respect you," cried they, "but you are a dead man if you fire. Do not mistake us; we are not going to the enemy: were they now to come out, you would see us fight under your orders with as much resolution and alacrity as ever."<sup>1</sup>

Their threat was not an idle one. In an attempt to suppress the mutiny there was a bloody affray, in which numbers were wounded on both sides; among whom were several officers. One captain was killed.

Three regiments which had taken no part in the mutiny were paraded under their officers. The mutineers compelled them to join their ranks. Their number being increased to about thirteen hundred, they seized upon six field-pieces, and set out in the night for Philadelphia under command of their sergeants.

Fearing the enemy might take advantage of this outbreak, Wayne detached a Jersey brigade to Chatham, and ordered the militia to be called out there. Alarm-fires were kindled upon

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<sup>1</sup> Quincy's *Memoir of Major Shaw*, p. 85.



the hills ; alarm-guns boomed from post to post ; the country was soon on the alert.

Wayne was not "Mad Anthony" on the present occasion. All his measures were taken with judgment and forecast. He sent provisions after the mutineers, lest they should supply their wants from the country people by force. Two officers of rank spurred to Philadelphia, to apprise Congress of the approach of the insurgents, and put it upon its guard. Wayne sent a despatch with news of the outbreak to Washington ; he then mounted his horse, and accompanied by Colonels Butler and Stewart, two officers popular with the troops, set off after the mutineers, either to bring them to a halt, or to keep with them, and seek every occasion to exert a favorable influence over them.

Washington received Wayne's letter at his head-quarters at New Windsor on the 3d of January. His first impulse was to set out at once for the insurgent camp. Second thoughts showed the impolicy of such a move. Before he could overtake the mutineers, they would either have returned to their duty, or their affair would be in the hands of Congress. How far, too, could his own troops be left with safety, distressed as they were for clothing and provisions ? Beside, the navigation of the Hudson was still open ; should any disaffection appear in the neighboring garrison of West Point, the British might send up an expedition from New York to take advantage of it. Under these circumstances, he determined to continue at New Windsor.

He wrote to Wayne, however, approving of his intention to keep with the troops, and improve every favorable interval of passion. His letter breathes that paternal spirit with which he watched over the army ; and that admirable moderation mingled with discipline with which he managed and moulded their wayward moods. "Opposition," said he, "as it did not succeed in the first instance, cannot be effectual while the men remain together, but will keep alive resentment, and may tempt them to turn about and go in a body to the enemy ; who, by their emissaries, will use every argument and means in their power to persuade them that it is their only asylum ; which, if they find their passage stopped at the Delaware, and hear that the Jersey militia are collecting in their rear, they may think but too probable. I would, therefore, recommend it to you to cross the Delaware with them, draw from them what they conceive to be their principal grievances, and promise faithfully to represent to Congress and to the State the substance of them, and

endeavor to obtain a redress. If they could be stopped at Bristol or Germantown, the better. I look upon it, that if you can bring them to a negotiation, matters may be afterwards accommodated; but that an attempt to reduce them by force will either drive them to the enemy, or dissipate them in such a manner that they will never be recovered."

How clearly one reads in this letter that temperate and magnanimous spirit which moved over the troubled waters of the Revolution, allayed the fury of the storms, and controlled every thing into peace.

Having visited the Highland posts of the Hudson, and satisfied himself of the fidelity of the garrisons, Washington ordered a detachment of eleven hundred men to be ready to march at a moment's warning. General Knox, also, was despatched by him to the Eastern States to represent to their governments the alarming crisis produced by a long neglect of the subsistence of the army, and to urge them to send on immediately money, clothing, and other supplies for their respective lines.

In the mean time, as Washington had apprehended, Sir Henry Clinton received intelligence at New York of the mutiny, and hastened to profit by it. Emissaries were despatched to the camp of the mutineers, holding out offers of pardon, protection, and ample pay, if they would return to their allegiance to the crown. On the 4th of January, although the rain poured in torrents, troops and cannon were hurried on board of vessels of every description, and transported to Staten Island, Sir Henry accompanying them. There they were to be held in readiness, either to land at Amboy in the Jerseys, should the revolters be drawn in that direction, or to make a dash at West Point, should the departure of Washington leave that post assailable.

General Wayne and his companions, Colonels Butler and Stewart, had overtaken the insurgent troops on the 3d of January, at Middlebrook. They were proceeding in military form, under the control of a self-constituted board of sergeants, whose orders were implicitly obeyed. A sergeant-major, who had formerly deserted from the British army, had the general command.

Conferences were held by Wayne with sergeants delegated from each regiment. They appeared to be satisfied with the mode and promises of redress held out to them; but the main body of the mutineers persisted in revolt, and proceeded on the next day to Princeton. Wayne hoped they might continue further on, and would gladly have seen them across the Dela-

ware, beyond the influence of the enemy; but their leaders clung to Princeton, lest in further movements they might not be able to keep their followers together. Their proceedings continued to be orderly; military forms were still observed; they obeyed their leaders, behaved well to the people of the country, and committed no excesses.

General Wayne and Colonels Butler and Stewart remained with them in an equivocal position; popular, but without authority, and almost in durance. The insurgents professed themselves still ready to march under them against the enemy, but would permit none other of their former officers to come among them. The Marquis de Lafayette, General St. Clair and Colonel Laurens, the newly-appointed minister to France, arrived at the camp and were admitted; but afterwards were ordered away at a short notice.

The news of the revolt caused great consternation in Philadelphia. A committee of Congress set off to meet the insurgents, accompanied by Reed, the President of Pennsylvania, and one or two other officers, and escorted by a city troop of horse. The committee halted at Trenton, whence President Reed wrote to Wayne, requesting a personal interview at four o'clock in the afternoon, at four miles' distance from Princeton. Wayne was moreover told to inform the troops, that he (Reed) would be there to receive any propositions from them, and redress any injuries they might have sustained; but that, after the indignities they had offered to the marquis and General St. Clair, he could not venture to put himself in their power.

Wayne, knowing that the letter was intended for his troops more than for himself, read it publicly on the parade. It had a good effect upon the sergeants and many of the men. The idea that the president of their State should have to leave the seat of government and stoop to treat with them, touched their sectional pride and their home feelings. They gathered round the horseman who had brought the letter, and inquired anxiously whether President Reed was unkindly disposed towards them; intimating privately their dislike to the business in which they were engaged.

Still, it was not thought prudent for President Reed to trust himself within their camp. Wayne promised to meet him on the following day (7th), though it seemed uncertain whether he was master of himself, or whether he was not a kind of prisoner. Tidings had just been received of the movements of Sir Henry Clinton, and of tempting overtures he intended to

make, and it was feared the men might listen to them. Three of the light horse were sent in the direction of Amboy to keep a look-out for any landing of the enemy.

At this critical juncture, two of Sir Henry's emissaries arrived in the camp, and delivered to the leaders of the malcontents, a paper containing his seductive proposals and promises. The mutineers, though openly arrayed in arms against their government, spurned at the idea of turning "Arnolds," as they termed it. The emissaries were seized and conducted to General Wayne, who placed them in confinement, promising that they should be liberated, should the pending negotiation fail.

This incident had a great effect in inspiring hope of the ultimate loyalty of the troops; and the favorable representations of the temper of the men, made by General Wayne in a personal interview, determined President Reed to venture among them. The consequences of their desertion to the enemy were too alarming to be risked. "I have but one life to lose," said he, "and my country has the first claim to it."<sup>1</sup>

As he approached Princeton with his suite, he found guards regularly posted, who turned out and saluted him in military style. The whole line was drawn out under arms near the college, and the artillery on the point of firing a salute. He prevented it, lest it should alarm the country. It was a hard task for him to ride along the line as if reviewing troops regularly organized; but the crisis required some sacrifice of the kind. The sergeants were all in the places of their respective officers, and saluted the president as he passed; never were mutineers more orderly and decorous.

The propositions now offered to the troops were:—To discharge all those who had enlisted indefinitely for three years or during the war: the fact to be inquired into by three commissioners appointed by the executive—where the original enlistment could not be produced in evidence, the oath of the soldier to suffice.

To give immediate certificates for the deficit in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency, and the arrearages to be settled as soon as circumstances would permit.

To furnish them immediately with certain specified articles of clothing which were most wanted.

These propositions proving satisfactory, the troops set out for Trenton, where the negotiation was concluded.

Most of the artillerists and many of the infantry obtained

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Executive Council.

their discharges ; some on their oaths, others on account of the vague terms under which they had been enlisted ; forty days' furlough was given to the rest, and thus, for a time, the whole insurgent force was dissolved.

The two spies who had tampered with the fidelity of the troops, were tried by a court-martial, found guilty, and hanged at the cross-roads near Trenton. A reward of fifty guineas each, was offered to two sergeants who had arrested and delivered them up. They declined accepting it ; saying, they had merely acted by order of the board of sergeants. The hundred guineas were then offered to the board. Their reply is worthy of record. " It was not," said they, " for the sake or through any expectation of reward, but for the love of our country, that we sent the spies immediately to General Wayne ; we therefore do not consider ourselves entitled to any other reward but the love of our country, and do jointly agree to accept of no other."

The accommodation entered into with the mutineers of the Pennsylvania line appeared to Washington of doubtful policy, and likely to have a pernicious effect on the whole army. His apprehensions were soon justified by events. On the night of the 20th of January, a part of the Jersey troops, stationed at Pompton, rose in arms, claiming the same terms just yielded to the Pennsylvanians. For a time, it was feared the revolt would spread throughout the line.

Sir Henry Clinton was again on the alert. Troops were sent to Staten Island to be ready to cross into the Jerseys, and an emissary was despatched to tempt the mutineers with seductive offers.

In this instance, Washington adopted a more rigorous course than in the other. The present insurgents were not so formidable in point of numbers as the Pennsylvanians ; the greater part of them, also, were foreigners, for whom he felt less sympathy than for native troops. He was convinced too of the fidelity of the troops under his immediate command, who were from the Eastern States. A detachment from the Massachusetts line was sent under Major-General Howe, who was instructed to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission ; to grant them no terms while in arms, or in a state of resistance ; and on their surrender, instantly to execute a few of the most active and incendiary leaders. " You will also try," added he, " to avail yourself of the services of the militia, representing to them how dangerous to civil liberty, is the precedent of armed soldiers dictating to the country."

His orders were punctually obeyed, and were crowned with complete success. Howe had the good fortune, after a tedious night march, to surprise the mutineers napping in their huts just at daybreak. Five minutes only were allowed them to parade without their arms and give up their ringleaders. This was instantly complied with, and two of them were executed on the spot. Thus the mutiny was quelled, the officers resumed their command, and all things were restored to order.<sup>1</sup>

Thus terminated an insurrection, which, for a time, had spread alarm among the friends of American liberty, and excited the highest hopes of its foes. The circumstances connected with it had ultimately a beneficial effect in strengthening the confidence of those friends, by proving that, however the Americans might quarrel with their own government, nothing could again rally them under the royal standard.

A great cause of satisfaction to Washington was the ratification of the articles of confederation between the States, which took place not long after this agitating juncture. A set of articles had been submitted to Congress by Dr. Franklin, as far back as 1775. A form had been prepared and digested by a committee in 1776, and agreed upon, with some modifications in 1777, but had ever since remained in abeyance, in consequence of objections made by individual States. The confederation was now complete, and Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, congratulated him and the body over which he presided, on an event long wished for, and which he hoped would have the happiest effects upon the politics of this country, and be of essential service to our cause in Europe.

It was, after all, an instrument far less efficacious than its advocates had anticipated; but it served an important purpose in binding the States together as a nation, and keeping them from falling asunder into individual powers, after the pressure of external danger should cease to operate.

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<sup>1</sup> Memoir of Major Shaw, by Hon. Josiah Quincy, p. 89.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

**EXPEDITION OF ARNOLD INTO VIRGINIA —BUCCANEERING RAVAGES — CHECKED BY STEUBEN — ARNOLD AT PORTSMOUTH — CONGRESS RESOLVES TO FORM HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS — HAMILTON SUGGESTED BY SULLIVAN FOR DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE — HIGH OPINION OF HIM EXPRESSED BY WASHINGTON — MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HAMILTON AND THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.**

THE armament with which Arnold boasted he was "to shake the continent," met with that boisterous weather which often rages along our coast in the winter. His ships were tempest-tost and scattered, and half of his cavalry horses and several of his guns had to be thrown overboard. It was the close of the year when he anchored in the Chesapeake.

Virginia, at the time, was almost in a defenceless state. Baron Steuben, who had the general command there, had recently detached such of his regular troops as were clothed and equipped, to the South to re-enforce General Greene. The remainder, five or six hundred in number, deficient in clothing, blankets, and tents, were scarcely fit to take the field, and the volunteers and militia lately encamped before Portsmouth, had been disbanded. Governor Jefferson, on hearing of the arrival of the fleet, called out the militia from the neighboring counties; but few could be collected on the spur of the moment, for the whole country was terror-stricken and in confusion. Having land and sea forces at his command, Arnold opened the new year with a buccaneering ravage. Ascending James River with some small vessels which he had captured, he landed on the 4th of January with nine hundred men at Westover, about twenty-five miles below Richmond, and pushed for the latter place, at that time little more than a village, though the metropolis of Virginia. Halting for the night within twelve miles of it, he advanced on the following day with as much military parade as possible, so as to strike terror into a militia patrol, which fled back to Richmond, reporting that a British force, fifteen hundred strong, was at hand.

It was Arnold's hope to capture the governor; but the latter, after providing for the security of as much as possible of the public stores, had left Richmond the evening before on horseback to join his family at Tuckahoe, whence, on the following day, he conveyed them to a place of safety. Governor Jeffer-

son got back by noon to Manchester, on the opposite side of James River, in time to see Arnold's marauders march into the town. Many of the inhabitants had fled to the country; some stood terrified spectators on the hills; not more than two hundred men were in arms for the defence of the place; these, after firing a few volleys, retreated to Richmond and Shockoe Hills, whence they were driven by the cavalry, and Arnold had possession of the capital. He sent some of the citizens to the governor, offering to spare the town, provided his ships might come up James River to be laden with tobacco from the warehouses. His offer was indignantly rejected, whereupon fire was set to the public edifices, stores, and workshops; private houses were pillaged, and a great quantity of tobacco consumed.

While this was going on, Colonel Simcoe had been detached to Westham, six miles up the river, where he destroyed a cannon foundry and sacked a public magazine; broke off the trunnions of the cannon, and threw into the river the powder which he could not carry away, and, after effecting a complete devastation, rejoined Arnold at Richmond, which during the ensuing night resounded with the drunken orgies of the soldiery.

Having completed his ravage at Richmond, Arnold re-embarked at Westover and fell slowly down the river, landing occasionally to burn, plunder, and destroy; pursued by Steuben with a few Continental troops and all the militia that he could muster. General Nelson, also, with similar levies opposed him. Lower down the river some skirmishing took place, a few of Arnold's troops were killed and a number wounded, but he made his way to Portsmouth, opposite Norfolk, where he took post on the 20th of January, and proceeded to fortify.

Steuben would have attempted to drive him from this position, but his means were totally inadequate. Collecting from various parts of the country all the force that could be mustered, he so disposed it at different points as to hem the traitor in, prevent his making further incursions, and drive him back to his intrenchments should he attempt any.

Governor Jefferson returned to Richmond after the enemy had left it, and wrote thence to the commander-in-chief an account of this ravaging incursion of "the paricide Arnold." It was mortifying to Washington to see so inconsiderable a party committing such extensive depredations with impunity, but it was his opinion that their principal object was to make a diversion in favor of Cornwallis; and as the evils to be apprehended from Arnold's predatory incursions were not to be com-



pared with the injury to the common cause, and the danger to Virginia in particular, which would result from the conquest of the States to the southward, he adjured Jefferson not to permit attention to immediate safety so to engross his thoughts as to divert him from measures for re-enforcing the Southern army.

About this time an important resolution was adopted in Congress. Washington had repeatedly, in his communications to that body, attributed much of the distresses and disasters of the war to the congressional mode of conducting business through committees and "boards," thus causing irregularity and delay, preventing secrecy and augmenting expense. He was greatly rejoiced, therefore, when Congress decided to appoint heads of departments; secretaries of foreign affairs, of war and of marine, and a superintendent of finance. "I am happy, thrice happy, on private as well as public account," writes he, "to find that these are in train. For it will ease my shoulders of an immense burthen, which the deranged and perplexed situation of our affairs, and the distresses of every department of the army, had placed upon them."

General Sullivan, to whom this was written, and who was in Congress, was a warm friend of Washington's aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton, and he sounded the commander-in-chief as to the qualifications of the colonel to take charge of the department of finance. "I am unable to answer," replied Washington, "because I never entered upon a discussion with him, but this I can venture to advance, from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found of his age, who have more general knowledge than he possesses; and none whose soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and sterling virtue."

This was a warm eulogium for one of Washington's circum-spect character, but it was sincere. Hamilton had been four years in his military family, and always treated by him with marked attention and regard. Indeed, it had surprised many to see so young a man admitted like a veteran into his counsels. It was but a few days after Washington had penned the eulogium just quoted, when a scene took place between him and the man he had praised so liberally, that caused him deep chagrin. We give it as related by Hamilton himself, in a letter to General Schuyler, one of whose daughters he had recently married.

"An unexpected change has taken place in my situation," writes Hamilton (February 18). "I am no longer a member of the general's family. This information will surprise you, and

the manner of the change will surprise you more. Two days ago the general and I passed each other on the stairs: — he told me he wanted to speak to me. I answered that I would wait on him immediately. I went below and delivered Mr. Tilghman a letter to be sent to the commissary, containing an order of a pressing and interesting nature.

“Returning to the general, I was stopped on the way by the Marquis de Lafayette, and we conversed together about a minute on a matter of business. He can testify how impatient I was to get back, and that I left him in a manner, which, but for our intimacy, would have been more than abrupt. Instead of finding the general, as is usual, in his room, I met him at the head of the stairs, where, accosting me in an angry tone, ‘Colonel Hamilton (said he), you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes; I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect.’ I replied, without petulancy, but with decision, ‘I am not conscious of it, sir; but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part.’ ‘Very well, sir (said he), if it be your choice,’ or something to this effect, and we separated. I sincerely believe my absence, which gave so much umbrage, did not last two minutes.

“In less than an hour after, Tilghman came to me in the general’s name, assuring me of his great confidence in my abilities, integrity, usefulness, etc., and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion. I requested Mr. Tilghman to tell him, — 1st. That I had taken my resolution in a manner not to be revoked. 2d. That as a conversation could serve no other purpose than to produce explanations, mutually disagreeable, though I certainly would not refuse an interview, if he desired it, yet I would be happy, if he would permit me to decline it. 3d. That though determined to leave the family, the same principles which had kept me so long in it, would continue to direct my conduct towards him when out of it. 4th. That, however, I did not wish to distress him, or the public business, by quitting him before he could derive other assistance by the return of some of the gentlemen who were absent. 5th. And that, in the mean time, it depended on him to let our behavior to each other be the same as if nothing had happened. He consented to decline the conversation, and thanked me for my offer of continuing any aid in the manner I had mentioned.

“I have given you so particular a detail of our difference, from the desire I have to justify myself in your opinion. Perhaps you may think I was precipitate in rejecting the overture

made by the general to an accommodation. I assure you, my dear sir, it was not the effect of resentment; it was the deliberate result of maxims I had long formed for the government of my own conduct."

In considering this occurrence as stated by Hamilton himself, we think he was in the wrong. His hurrying past the general on the stairs without pausing, although the latter expressed a wish to speak with him; his giving no reason for his haste, which, however "pressing" the letter he had to deliver, he could have spared at least a moment to do; his tarrying below to talk with the Marquis de Lafayette, the general all this time remaining at the head of the stairs, had certainly an air of great disrespect, and we do not wonder that the commander-in-chief was deeply offended at being so treated by his youthful aide-de-camp. His expression of displeasure was measured and dignified, however irritated he may have been, and such an explanation, at least, was due to him, as Hamilton subsequently rendered to General Schuyler, through a desire to justify himself in that gentleman's opinion.

The reply of Hamilton, on the contrary, savored very much of petulance, however devoid he may have considered it of that quality, and his avowed determination "to part," simply because taxed by the general with want of respect, was singularly curt and abrupt.

Washington's subsequent overture, intended to sooth the wounded sensitiveness of Hamilton and soften the recent rebuke, by assurances of unaltered confidence and esteem, strikes us as in the highest degree noble and gracious, and furnishes another instance of that magnanimity which governed his whole conduct. We trust that General Schuyler, in reply to Hamilton's appeal, intimated that he had indeed been precipitate in rejecting such an overture.

The following passage in Hamilton's letter to Schuyler, gives the real key to his conduct on this occasion.

"I always disliked the office of an aide-de-camp, as having in it a kind of personal dependence. I refused to serve in this capacity with two major-generals, at an early period of the war. Infected, however, with the enthusiasm of the times, an idea of the general's character overcame my scruples, and induced me to accept his invitation to enter into his family. . . . It has been often with great difficulty that I have prevailed on myself not to renounce it; but while, from motives of public utility, I was doing violence to my feelings, I was always determined, if there should ever happen a breach between us, never to consent

to an accommodation. I was persuaded that when once that nice barrier which marked the boundaries of what we owed to each other should be thrown down, it might be propped again, but could never be restored."

Hamilton, in fact, had long been ambitious of an independent position, and of some opportunity, as he said, "to raise his character above mediocrity." "When an expedition by Lafayette against Staten Island had been meditated in the autumn of 1780, he had applied to the commander-in-chief, through the Marquis, for the command of a battalion, which was without a field officer. Washington had declined on the ground that giving him a whole battalion might be a subject of dissatisfaction, and that should any accident happen to him in the actual state of affairs at head-quarters, the commander-in-chief would be embarrassed for want of his assistance.

He had next been desirous of the post of adjutant-general, which Colonel Alexander Scammel was about to resign, and was recommended for that office by Lafayette and Greene, but, before their recommendations reached Washington, he had already sent in to Congress the name of Brigadier-General Hand, who received the nomination.

These disappointments may have rendered Hamilton doubtful of his being properly appreciated by the commander-in-chief; impaired his devotion to him, and determined him, as he says, "if there should ever happen a breach between them, never to consent to an accommodation." It almost looks as if, in his high-strung and sensitive mood, he had been on the watch for an offence, and had grasped at the shadow of one.

Some short time after the rupture had taken place, Washington received a letter from Lafayette, then absent in Virginia, in which the Marquis observes, "Considering the footing I am upon with your Excellency, it would, perhaps, appear strange to you, that I never mentioned a circumstance which lately happened in your family. I was the first who knew of it, and from that moment exerted every means in my power to prevent a separation, which I knew was not agreeable to your Excellency. To this measure I was prompted by affection to you; but I thought it was improper to mention any thing about it, until you were pleased to impart it to me."

The following was Washington's reply: "The event, which you seem to speak of with regret, my friendship for you would most assuredly have induced me to impart to you the moment it happened, had it not been for the request of Hamilton, who desired that no mention should be made of it. Why this

## LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

injunction on me, while he was communicating it himself, is a little extraordinary. But I complied, and religiously fulfilled it."

We are happy to add, that though a temporary coolness took place between the commander-in-chief and his late favorite aide-de-camp, it was but temporary. The friendship between these illustrious men was destined to survive the Revolution, and to signalize itself through many eventful years, and stands recorded in the correspondence of Washington almost at the last moment of his life.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CORNWALLIS PREPARES TO INVADE NORTH CAROLINA — TARLETON SENT AGAINST MORGAN — BATTLE AT COWPENS — MORGAN PUSHES FOR THE CATAWBA WITH SPOILS AND PRISONERS — CORNWALLIS ENDEAVORS TO INTERCEPT HIM — THE RISING OF THE RIVER — CORNWALLIS AT RAMSOUR'S MILLS.

THE stress of war, as Washington apprehended, was at present shifted to the South. In a former chapter, we left General Greene, in the latter part of December, posted with one division of his army on the east side of the Pedee River in North Carolina, having detached General Morgan with the other division, one thousand strong, to take post near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad Rivers in South Carolina.

Cornwallis lay encamped about seventy miles to the southwest of Greene, at Winnsborough in Fairfield district. General Leslie had recently arrived at Charleston from Virginia, and was advancing to re-enforce him with fifteen hundred men. This would give Cornwallis such a superiority of force, that he prepared for a second invasion of North Carolina. His plan was to leave Lord Rawdon at the central post of Camden with a considerable body of troops to keep all quiet, while his lordship by rapid marches would throw himself between Greene and Virginia, cut him off from all re-enforcements in that quarter, and oblige him either to make battle with his present force, or retreat precipitately from North Carolina, which would be disgraceful.<sup>2</sup> In either case Cornwallis counted on a general rising

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<sup>1</sup> His last letter to Hamilton, in which he assures him of "his very great esteem and regard," was written by Washington but two days before his death. Sparks, xl. 499.

<sup>2</sup> Cornwallis to Lord George Germain, March 17.

of the royalists ; a re-establishment of regal government in the Carolinas, and the clearing away of all impediments to further triumphs in Virginia and Maryland.

By recent information, he learnt that Morgan had passed both the Catawba and Broad Rivers, and was about seventy miles to the north-west of him, on his way to the district of Ninety-Six. As he might prove extremely formidable if left in his rear, Tarleton was sent in quest of him, with about three hundred and fifty of his famous cavalry, a corps of legion and light infantry, and a number of the royal artillery with two field-pieces ; about eleven hundred choice troops in all. His instructions were to pass Broad River for the protection of Ninety-Six, and either to strike at Morgan and push him to the utmost ; or to drive him out of the country, so as to prevent his giving any trouble on that side.

Cornwallis moved with his main force on the 12th of December, in a north-west direction between the Broad River and the Catawba, leading toward the back country. This was for the purpose of crossing the great rivers at their fords near their sources ; for they are fed by innumerable petty streams which drain the mountains, and are apt in the winter time, when storms of rain prevail, to swell and become impassable below their forks. He took this route also, to cut off Morgan's retreat, or prevent his junction with Greene, should Tarleton's expedition fail of its object. General Leslie, whose arrival was daily expected, was to move up along the eastern side of the Wateree and Catawba, keeping parallel with his lordship and joining him above. Every thing on the part of Cornwallis was well planned ; and seemed to promise him a successful campaign.

Tarleton, after several days' hard marching, came upon the traces of Morgan, who was posted on the north bank of the Pacolet, to guard the passes of that river. He sent word to Cornwallis of his intention to force a passage across the river, or compel Morgan either to fight or retreat, and suggested that his lordship should proceed up the eastern bank of Broad River, so as to be at hand to co-operate. His lordship, in consequence, took up a position at Turkey Creek, on Broad River.

Morgan had been recruited by North Carolina and Georgia militia, so that his force was nearly equal in number to that of Tarleton, but, in point of cavalry and discipline, vastly inferior. Cornwallis, too, was on his left, and might get in his rear ; checking his impulse, therefore, to dispute the passage of the Pacolet, he crossed that stream and retreated toward the upper fords of Broad River.

Tarleton reached the Pacolet on the evening of the 15th, but halted on observing some troops on the opposite bank. It was merely a party of observation which Morgan had left there, but he supposed that officer to be there in full force. After some manœuvring to deceive his adversary, he crossed the river before daylight at Easterwood shoals. There was no opposition. Still he proceeded warily, until he learnt that Morgan, instead of being in his neighborhood, was in full march towards Broad River. Tarleton now pressed on in pursuit. At ten o'clock at night he reached an encampment which Morgan had abandoned a few hours previously, apparently in great haste, for the camp fires were still smoking, and provisions had been left behind half-cooked. Eager to come upon his enemy while in the confusion of a hurried flight, Tarleton allowed his exhausted troops but a brief repose, and, leaving his baggage under a guard, resumed his dogged march about two o'clock in the night; tramping forward through swamps and rugged broken grounds, round the western side of Thickety Mountain. A little before daylight of the 17th, he captured two videttes, from whom he learnt, to his surprise, that Morgan, instead of a headlong retreat, had taken a night's repose, and was actually preparing to give him battle.

Morgan, in fact, had been urged by his officers to retreat across Broad River, which was near by, and make for the mountainous country; but, closely pressed as he was, he feared to be overtaken while fording the river, and while his troops were fatigued, and in confusion; beside, being now nearly equal in number to the enemy, military pride would not suffer him to avoid a combat.

The place where he came to halt was known in the early grants by the name of Hannah's Cowpens, being part of a grazing establishment of a man named Hannah. It was in an open wood, favorable to the action of cavalry. There were two eminences of unequal height, and separated from each other by an interval about eighty yards wide. To the first eminence, which was the highest, there was an easy ascent of about three hundred yards. On these heights Morgan had posted himself. His flanks were unprotected, and the Broad River, running parallel on his rear, about six miles distant, and winding round on the left, would cut off retreat, should the day prove unfortunate.

The ground, in the opinion of tacticians, was not well chosen; Morgan, a veteran bush-fighter, vindicated it in after

## *LIFE OF WASHINGTON.*

times in his own characteristic way. "Had I crossed the river, one half of the militia would have abandoned me. Had a swamp been in view, they would have made for it. As to covering my wings, I knew the foe I had to deal with, and that there would be nothing but downright fighting. As to a retreat, I wished to cut off all hope of one. Should Tarleton surround me with his cavalry, it would keep my troops from breaking away, and make them depend upon their bayonets. When men are forced to fight, they will sell their lives dearly."

In arranging his troops for action, he drew out his infantry in two lines. The first was composed of the North and South Carolina militia, under Colonel Pickens, having an advanced corps of North Carolina and Georgia volunteer riflemen. This line, on which he had the least dependence, was charged to wait until the enemy were within dead shot; then to take good aim, fire two volleys and fall back.

The second line, drawn up a moderate distance in the rear of the first, and near the brow of the main eminence, was composed of Colonel Howard's light infantry and the Virginia riflemen; all Continental troops. They were informed of the orders which had been given to the first line, lest they should mistake their falling back for a retreat. Colonel Howard had the command of this line, on which the greatest reliance was placed.

About a hundred and fifty yards in the rear of the second line, and on the slope of the lesser eminence, was Colonel Washington's troop of cavalry, about eighty strong; with about fifty mounted Carolinian volunteers, under Major McCall, armed with sabres and pistols.

British writers of the day gave Morgan credit for uncommon ability and judgment in the disposition of his force; placing the militia, in whom he had no great confidence, in full view on the edge of the wood, and keeping his best troops out of sight, but drawn up in excellent order and prepared for all events.<sup>1</sup>

It was about eight o'clock in the morning (January 17), when Tarleton came up. The position of the Americans seemed to him to give great advantage to his cavalry, and he made hasty preparation for immediate attack, anticipating an easy victory. Part of his infantry he formed into a line, with dragoons on each flank. The rest of the infantry and cavalry were to be a reserve, and to wait for orders.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Register, 1781, p. 56.



There was a physical difference in the condition of the adverse troops. The British were haggard from want of sleep and a rough night-tramp; the Americans, on the contrary, were fresh from a night's rest, invigorated by a morning's meal, and deliberately drawn up. Tarleton took no notice of these circumstances, or disregarded them. Impetuous at all times, and now confident of victory, he did not even wait until the reserve could be placed, but led on his first line, which rushed shouting to the attack. The North Carolina and Georgia riflemen in the advance, delivered their fire with effect, and fell back to the flanks of Pickens' militia. These, as they had been instructed, waited until the enemy were within fifty yards, and then made a destructive volley, but soon gave way before the push of the bayonet. The British infantry pressed up to the second line, while forty of their cavalry attacked it on the right, seeking to turn its flank. Colonel Howard made a brave stand, and for some time there was a bloody conflict; seeing himself, however, in danger of being outflanked, he endeavored to change his front to the right. His orders were misunderstood, and his troops were falling into confusion, when Morgan rode up and ordered them to retreat over the hill, where Colonel Washington's cavalry were hurried forward for their protection.

The British, seeing the troops retiring over the hill, rushed forward irregularly in pursuit of what they deemed a routed foe. To their astonishment, they were met by Colonel Washington's dragoons, who spurred on them impetuously, while Howard's infantry facing about, gave them an effective volley of musketry, and then charged with the bayonet.

The enemy now fell into complete confusion. Some few artillerymen attempted to defend their guns, but were cut down or taken prisoners, and the cannon and colors captured. A panic seized upon the British troops, aided no doubt by fatigue and exhaustion. A general flight took place. Tarleton endeavored to bring his legion cavalry into action to retrieve the day. They had stood aloof as a reserve, and now, infected by the panic, turned their backs upon their commander, and galloped off through the woods, riding over the flying infantry.

Fourteen of his officers, however, and forty of his dragoons, remained true to him; with these he attempted to withstand the attack of Washington's cavalry, and a fierce mêlée took place; but on the approach of Howard's infantry Tarleton gave up all for lost, and spurred off with his few but faithful adherents, trusting to the speed of their horses for safety.

They made for Hamilton's Ford on Broad River, thence to seek the main army under Cornwallis.

The loss of the British in this action was ten officers and above one hundred men killed, two hundred wounded, and between five and six hundred rank and file made prisoners; while the Americans had but twelve men killed and sixty wounded. The disparity of loss shows how complete had been the confusion and defeat of the enemy. "During the whole period of the war," says one of their own writers, "no other action reflected so much dishonor on the British arms."<sup>1</sup>

The spoils taken by Morgan, according to his own account, were two field-pieces, two standards, eight hundred muskets, one travelling forge, thirty-five wagons, seventy negroes, upwards of one hundred dragoon-horses, and all the music. The enemy, however, had destroyed most of their baggage, which was immense.

Morgan did not linger on the field of battle. Leaving Colonel Pickens with a body of militia under the protection of a flag, to bury the dead and provide for the wounded of both armies, he set out the same day about noon, with his prisoners and spoils. Lord Cornwallis, with his main force, was at Turkey Creek, only twenty-five miles distant, and must soon hear of the late battle. His object was to get to the Catawba before he could be intercepted by his lordship, who lay nearer than he did to the fords of that river. Before nightfall he crossed Broad River at the Cherokee Ford, and halted for a few hours on its northern bank. Before daylight of the 18th he was again on the march. Colonel Washington, who had been in pursuit of the enemy, rejoined him in the course of the day, as also did Colonel Pickens, who had left such of the wounded as could not be moved, under the protection of the flag of truce.

Still fearing that he might be intercepted before he could reach the Catawba, he put his prisoners in charge of Colonel Washington and the cavalry, with orders to move higher up into the country and cross the main Catawba at the Island Ford; while he himself pushed forward for that river by the direct route; thus to distract the attention of the enemy should they be in pursuit, and to secure his prisoners from being recaptured.

Cornwallis, on the eventful day of the 17th, was at his camp on Turkey Creek, confidently waiting for tidings from Tarleton

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman, ii. p. 324.

of a new triumph, when, towards evening, some of his routed dragoons came straggling into camp, haggard and forlorn, to tell the tale of his defeat. It was a thunder-stroke. Tarleton defeated! and by the rude soldier he had been so sure of entrapping! It seemed incredible. It was confirmed, however, the next morning, by the arrival of Tarleton himself, discomfited and crestfallen. In his account of the recent battle, he represented the force under Morgan to be two thousand. This exaggerated estimate, together with the idea that the militia would now be out in great force, rendered his lordship cautious. Supposing that Morgan, elated by his victory, would linger near the scene of triumph, or advance toward Ninety-Six, Cornwallis remained a day or two at Turkey Creek to collect the scattered remains of Tarleton's forces, and to wait the arrival of General Leslie, whose march had been much retarded by the waters, but who "was at last out of the swamps."

On the 19th, having been rejoined by Leslie, his lordship moved towards King's Creek, and thence in the direction of King's Mountain, until informed of Morgan's retreat toward the Catawba. Cornwallis now altered his course in that direction, and, trusting that Morgan, encumbered, as he supposed him to be, by prisoners and spoils, might be overtaken before he could cross that river, detached a part of his force, without baggage, in pursuit of him, while he followed on with the remainder.

Nothing, say the British chroniclers, could exceed the exertions of the detachment; but Morgan succeeded in reaching the Catawba and crossing it in the evening, just two hours before those in pursuit of him arrived on its banks. A heavy rain came on and fell all night, and by daybreak the river was so swollen as to be impassable.<sup>1</sup>

This sudden swelling of the river was considered by the Americans as something providential. It continued for several days, and gave Morgan time to send off his prisoners who had crossed several miles above, and to call out the militia of Mecklenburg and Rowan Counties to guard the fords of the river.<sup>2</sup>

Lord Cornwallis had moved slowly with his main body. He was encumbered by an immense train of baggage; the roads

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman, ii. 326. Cornwallis to Sir H. Clinton; see also Remembrancer, 1781, part 1, 303.

<sup>2</sup> This sudden swelling of the river has been stated by some writers as having taken place on the 29th, on the approach of Cornwallis's main force, whereas it took place on the 23d, on the approach of the *detachment* sent by his lordship in advance in pursuit of Morgan. The inaccuracy as to date has given rise to disputes among historians.

were through deep, red clay, and the country was cut up by streams and morasses. It was not until the 25th, that he assembled his whole force at Ramsour's Mills, on the Little Catawba, as the south fork of that river is called, and learnt that Morgan had crossed the main stream. Now he felt the loss he had sustained in the late defeat of Tarleton, of a great part of his light troops, which are the life and spirit of an army, and especially efficient in a thinly-peopled country of swamps and streams and forests, like that he was entangled in.

In this crippled condition, he determined to relieve his army of every thing that could impede rapid movement in his future operations. Two days, therefore, were spent by him at Ramsour's Mills, in destroying all such baggage and stores as could possibly be spared. He began with his own. His officers followed his example. Superfluities of all kinds were sacrificed without flinching. Casks of wine and spirituous liquors were staved; quantities even of provisions were sacrificed. No wagons were spared but those laden with hospital stores, salt and ammunition, and four empty ones, for the sick and wounded. The alacrity with which these sacrifices of comforts, conveniences, and even necessities, were made, was honorable to both officers and men.<sup>1</sup>

The whole expedition was subsequently sneered at by Sir Henry Clinton as being "something too like a Tartar move;" but his lordship was preparing for a trial of speed, where it was important to carry as light weight as possible.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

GREENE JOINS MORGAN ON THE CATAWBA — ADOPTS THE FABIAN POLICY — MOVEMENT OF CORNWALLIS TO CROSS THE CATAWBA — AFFAIR AT MCGOWAN'S FORD — MILITIA SURPRISED BY TARLETON AT TARRANT'S TAVERN — CORNWALLIS CHECKED BY THE RISING OF THE YADKIN — CONTEST OF SKILL AND SPEED OF THE TWO ARMIES IN A MARCH TO THE BANKS OF THE DAN.

GENERAL GREENE was gladdened by a letter from Morgan, written shortly after his defeat of Tarleton, and transmitted the news to Washington with his own generous comments. "The

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Register, 1781, p. 53.

victory was complete," writes he, "and the action glorious. The brilliancy and success with which it was fought, does the highest honor to the American arms, and adds splendor to the character of the general and his officers. I must beg leave to recommend them to your Excellency's notice, and doubt not but from your representation, Congress will receive pleasure from testifying their approbation of their conduct."

Another letter from Morgan, written on the 25th, spoke of the approach of Cornwallis and his forces. "My numbers," writes he, "are at this time too weak to fight them. I intend to move towards Salisbury, to get near the main army. I think it would be advisable to join our forces, and fight them before they join Phillips, which they certainly will do if they are not stopped."

Greene had recently received intelligence of the landing of troops at Wilmington, from a British squadron, supposed to be a force under Arnold, destined to push up Cape Fear River, and co-operate with Cornwallis; he had to prepare, therefore, not only to succor Morgan, but to prevent this co-operation. He accordingly detached General Stevens with his Virginia militia (whose term of service was nearly expired) to take charge of Morgan's prisoners, and conduct them to Charlottesville in Virginia. At the same time he wrote to the governors of North Carolina and Virginia, for all the aid they could furnish; to Steuben, to hasten forward his recruits, and to Shelby, Campbell and others, to take arms once more, and rival their achievements at King's Mountain.

This done, he left General Huger in command of the division on the Pedee, with orders to hasten on by forced marches to Salisbury, to join the other division; in the mean time he set off on horseback for Morgan's camp, attended merely by a guide, an aide-de-camp, and a sergeant's guard of dragoons. His object was to aid Morgan in assembling militia and checking the enemy until the junction of his forces could be effected. It was a hard ride of upwards of a hundred miles through a rough country. On the last day of January he reached Morgan's camp at Sherrard's Ford on the east side of the Catawba. The British army lay on the opposite side of the river, but a few miles distant from it, and appeared to be making preparations to force a passage across, as it was subsiding, and would soon be fordable. Greene supposed Cornwallis had in view a junction with Arnold at Cape Fear; he wrote, therefore, to General Huger to hurry on, so that with their united forces they could give his lordship a defeat before he could effect the

junction. "*I am not without hopes,*" writes he, "*of ruining Lord Cornwallis if he persists in his mad scheme of pushing through the country; and it is my earnest desire to form a junction as early for this purpose as possible. Desire Colonel Lee to force a march to join us. Here is a fine field, and great glory ahead.*"

More correct information relieved him from the apprehension of a co-operation of Arnold and Cornwallis. The British troops which had landed at Wilmington, were merely a small detachment sent from Charleston to establish a military depot for the use of Cornwallis in his southern campaign. They had taken possession of Wilmington without opposition.

Greene now changed his plans. He was aware of the ill-provided state of the British army, from the voluntary destruction of their wagons, tents and baggage. Indeed, when he first heard of this measure, on his arriving at Sherrard's Ford, he had exclaimed: "Then Cornwallis is ours." His plan now was to tempt the enemy continually with the prospect of a battle, but continually to elude one; to harass them by a long pursuit, draw them higher into the country, and gain time for the division advancing under Huger to join him. It was the Fabian policy that he had learnt under Washington, of whom he prided himself on being a disciple.

As the subsiding of the Catawba would enable Cornwallis to cross, Greene ordered Morgan to move off silently with his division, on the evening of the 31st, and to press his march all night, so as to gain a good start in advance, while he (Greene) would remain to bring on the militia, who were employed to check the enemy. These militia, assembling from the neighboring countries, did not exceed five hundred. Two hundred of them were distributed at different fords; the remaining three hundred, forming a corps of mounted riflemen under General Davidson, were to watch the movements of the enemy, and attack him wherever he should make his main attempt to cross. Whenever the enemy should have actually crossed, the different bodies of militia were to make the best of their way to a rendezvous, sixteen miles distant, on the road to Salisbury, where Greene would be waiting to receive them, and conduct their further movements.

While these dispositions were being made by the American commander, Cornwallis was preparing to cross the river. The night of the 31st was chosen for the attempt. To divert the attention of the Americans, he detached Colonels Webster and Tarleton with a part of the army to a public ford called Beattie's

Ford, where he supposed Davidson to be stationed. There they were to open a cannonade, and make a feint of forcing a passage. The main attempt, however, was to be made six miles lower down, at McGowan's, a private and unfrequented ford, where little, if any, opposition was anticipated.

Cornwallis set out for that ford, with the main body of his army, at one o'clock in the morning. The night was dark and rainy. He had to make his way through a wood and swamp where there was no road. His artillery stuck fast. The line passed on without them. It was near daybreak by the time the head of the column reached the ford. To their surprise, they beheld numerous camp fires on the opposite bank. Word was hastily carried to Cornwallis that the ford was guarded. It was so indeed: Davidson was there with his riflemen.

His lordship would have waited for his artillery, but the rain was still falling, and might render the river unfordable. At that place the Catawba was nearly five hundred yards wide, about three feet deep, very rapid, and full of large stones. The troops entered the river in platoons, to support each other against the current, and were ordered not to fire until they should gain the opposite bank. Colonel Hall, of the light infantry of the guards, led the way; the grenadiers followed. The noise of the water and the darkness covered their movements until they were nearly half way across, when they were descried by an American sentinel. He challenged them three times, and receiving no answer, fired. Terrified by the report, the man who was guiding the British turned and fled. Colonel Hall, thus abandoned, led the way directly across the river; whereas the true ford inclined diagonally further down. Hall had to pass through deeper water, but he reached a part of the bank where it was unguarded. The American pickets, too, which had turned out at the alarm given by the sentinel, had to deliver a distant and slanting fire. Still it had its effect. Three of the British were killed, and thirty-six wounded. Colonel Hall pushed on gallantly, but was shot down as he ascended the bank. The horse on which Cornwallis rode was wounded, but the brave animal carried his lordship to the shore, where he sank under him. The steed of Brigadier-General O'Hara rolled over with him into the water, and General Leslie's horse was borne away by the tumultuous current and with difficulty recovered.

General Davidson hastened with his men towards the place where the British were landing. The latter formed as soon as they found themselves on firm ground, charged Davidson's men

before he had time to get them in order, killed and wounded about forty, and put the rest to flight.

General Davidson was the last to leave the ground, and was killed just as he was mounting his horse. When the enemy had effected the passage, Tarleton was detached with his cavalry in pursuit of the militia, most of whom dispersed to their homes. Eager to avenge his late disgrace, he scoured the country, and made for Tarrant's tavern, about ten miles distant, where about a hundred of them had assembled from different fords, on their way to the rendezvous; and were refreshing themselves. As Tarleton came clattering upon them with his legion, they ran to their horses, delivered a hasty fire, which emptied some of his saddles, and then made for the woods; a few of the worst mounted were overtaken and slain. Tarleton, in his account of his campaigns, made the number nearly fifty; but the report of a British officer, who rode over the ground shortly afterwards, reduced it to ten. The truth probably lay between. The survivors were dispersed beyond rallying. Tarleton, satisfied with his achievement, rejoined the main body. Had he scoured the country a few miles further, General Greene and his suite might have fallen into his hands.

The general, informed that the enemy had crossed the Catawba at daybreak, awaited anxiously at the rendezvous the arrival of the militia. It was not until after midnight that he heard of their utter dispersion, and of the death of Davidson. Apprehending the rapid advance of Cornwallis, he hastened to rejoin Morgan, who with his division was pushing forward for the Yadkin, first sending orders to General Huger to conduct the other division by the most direct route to Guilford Court-house, where the forces were to be united. Greene spurred forward through heavy rain and deep, miry roads. It was a dreary ride and a lonely one, for he had detached his aides-de-camp in different directions, to collect the scattered militia. At mid-day he alighted, weary and travel-stained, at the inn at Salisbury, where the army physician who had charge of the sick and wounded prisoners received him at the door, and inquired after his well-being. "Fatigued, hungry, alone, and penniless," was Greene's heavy-hearted reply. The landlady, Mrs. Elizabeth Steele, overheard his desponding words. While he was seated at table, she entered the room, closed the door, and drawing from under her apron two bags of money, which she had carefully hoarded in those precarious times, "Take these," said the noble-hearted woman; "you will want them, and I can do without them." This is one of the number-



less instances of the devoted patriotism of our women during the Revolution. Their patriotism was apt to be purer and more disinterested than that of the men.

Cornwallis did not advance so rapidly as had been apprehended. After crossing the Catawba, he had to wait for his wagons and artillery, which had remained on the other side in the woods; so that by nightfall of the 1st of February he was not more than five miles on the road to Salisbury. Eager to come up with the Americans, he mounted some of the infantry upon the baggage horses, joined them to the cavalry, and sent the whole forward under General O'Hara. They arrived on the banks of the Yadkin at night, between the 2d and 3d of February, just in time to capture a few wagons lingering in the rear of the American army, which had passed. The riflemen who guarded them retreated after a short skirmish. There were no boats with which to cross; the Americans had secured them on the other side. The rain which had fallen throughout the day had overflowed the ford by which the American cavalry had passed. The pursuers were again brought to a stand. After some doubt and delay, Cornwallis took his course up the south side of the Yadkin, and crossed by what is still called the Shallow Ford, while Greene continued on unmolested to Guilford Court-house, where he was joined by General Huger and his division on the 9th.

Cornwallis was now encamped about twenty-five miles above them, at the old Moravian town of Salem. Greene summoned a council of war (almost the only time he was known to do so), and submitted the question whether or not to offer battle. There was a unanimous vote in the negative. A fourth part of the force was on the sick list, from nakedness and exposure. The official returns gave but two thousand and thirty-six, rank and file, fit for duty. Of these upwards of six hundred were militia.

Cornwallis had from twenty-five hundred to three thousand men, including three hundred cavalry, all thoroughly disciplined and well equipped. It was determined to continue the retreat.

The great object of Greene now was to get across the river Dan, and throw himself into Virginia. With the re-enforcements and assistance he might there expect to find, he hoped to effect the salvation of the South, and prevent the dismemberment of the Union. The object of Cornwallis was to get between him and Virginia, force him to a combat before he could receive those re-enforcements, or enclose him in between

the great rivers on the west, the sea on the east, and the two divisions of the British army under himself and Lord Rawdon on the north and south. His lordship had been informed that the lower part of the Dan, at present, could only be crossed in boats, and that the country could not afford a sufficient number for the passage of Greene's army; he trusted, therefore, to cut him off from the upper part of the river, where alone it was fordable. Greene, however, had provided against such a contingency. Boats had been secured at various places by his agents, and could be collected at a few hours' notice at the lower ferries. Instead, therefore, of striving with his lordship for the upper fords, Greene shaped his course for Boyd's and Irwin's Fords, just above the confluence of the Dan and Staunton Rivers which forms the Roanoke, and about seventy miles from Guilford Court-house. This would give him twenty-five miles advantage of Lord Cornwallis at the outset. General Kosciuszko was sent with a party in advance to collect the boats and throw up breastworks at the ferries.

In ordering his march, General Greene took the lead with the main body, the baggage, and stores. General Morgan would have had the command of the rear-guard, composed of seven hundred of the most alert and active troops, cavalry and light infantry; but, being disabled by a violent attack of ague and rheumatism, it was given to Colonel Otho H. Williams (formerly adjutant-general), who had with him Colonels Howard, Washington, and Lee.

This corps, detached some distance in the rear, did infinite service. Being lightly equipped, it could manœuvre in front of the British line of march, break down bridges, sweep off provisions, and impede its progress in a variety of ways, while the main body moved forward unmolested. It was now that Cornwallis most felt the severity of the blow he had received at the battle of the Cowpens in the loss of his light troops, having so few to cope with the élite corps under Williams.

Great abilities were shown by the commanders on either side at this momentous trial of activity and skill. It was a long and severe march for both armies, through a wild and rough country, thinly peopled, cut up by streams, partly covered by forests, along deep and frozen roads, under drenching rains, without tents at night, and with scanty supplies of provisions. The British suffered the least, for they were well equipped and comfortably clad, whereas the poor Americans were badly off for clothing, and many of them without shoes. The patriot armies

of the Revolution, however, were accustomed in their winter marches to leave evidences of their hardships in bloody foot-prints.

We forbear to enter into the details of this masterly retreat, the many stratagems and manœuvres of the covering party to delay and hoodwink the enemy. Tarleton himself bears witness in his narrative, that every measure of the Americans was judiciously designed and vigorously executed. So much had Cornwallis been misinformed at the outset as to the means below of passing the river, and so difficult was it, from want of light troops, to gain information while on the march, that he pushed on in the firm conviction that he was driving the American army into a trap, and would give it a signal blow before it could cross the Dan.

In the mean time, Greene, with the main body, reached the banks of the river, and succeeded in crossing over with ease in the course of a single day at Boyd's and Irwin's ferries, sending back word to Williams, who with his covering party was far in the rear. That intelligent officer encamped, as usual, in the evening, at a wary distance in front of the enemy, but stole a march upon them after dark, leaving his camp fires burning. He pushed on all night, arrived at the ferry in the morning of the 15th, having marched forty miles within the last four and twenty hours; and made such despatch in crossing, that his last troops had landed on the Virginia shore by the time the astonished enemy arrived on the opposite bank. Nothing, according to their own avowal, could surpass the grief and vexation of the British at discovering, on their arrival at Boyd's Ferry, "that all their toils and exertions had been vain, and that all their hopes were frustrated."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Register, 1781.

## CHAPTER XL.

CORNWALLIS TAKES POST AT HILLSBOROUGH — HIS PROCLAMATION — GREENE RECROSSES THE DAN — COUNTRY SCoured BY LEE AND PICKENS — AFFAIR WITH COLONEL PYLE — MANŒUVRES OF CORNWALLIS TO BRING GREENE TO ACTION — BATTLE OF GUILFORD COURT-HOUSE — GREENE RETREATS TO TROUBLESOME CREEK — CORNWALLIS MARCHES TOWARD CAPE FEAR — GREENE PURSUES HIM — IS BROUGHT TO A STAND AT DEEP RIVER — DETERMINES TO FACE ABOUT AND CARRY THE WAR INTO SOUTH CAROLINA — CORNWALLIS MARCHES FOR VIRGINIA.

For a day the two armies lay panting within sight of each other on the opposite banks of the river, which had put an end to the race. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, dated the day of the crossing, Greene writes: "On the Dan River, almost fatigued to death, having had a retreat to conduct of upwards of two hundred miles, manœuvring constantly in the face of the enemy to give time for the militia to turn out and get off our stores." And to Washington he writes (February 15), "Lord Cornwallis has been at our heels from day to day ever since we left Guilford, and our movements from thence to this place have been of the most critical kind, having a river in our front and the enemy in our rear. The miserable condition of the troops for clothing has rendered the march the most painful imaginable, many hundred of the soldiers tracking the ground with their bloody feet. Your feelings for the sufferings of the soldier, had you been with us, would have been severely tried." He concludes by an honorable testimonial in their favor: "Our army are in good spirits, notwithstanding their sufferings and excessive fatigue."

On the 16th, the river began to subside; the enemy might soon be able to cross. Greene prepared for a further retreat by sending forward his baggage on the road to Halifax, and securing the passage of the Staunton. At Halifax he was resolved to make a stand, rather than suffer the enemy to take possession of it without a struggle. Its situation on the Roanoke would make it a strong position for their army, supported by a fleet, and would favor their designs both on Virginia and the Carolinas. With a view to its defence, intrenchments had already been thrown up, under the direction of Kosciuszko.

Lord Cornwallis, however, did not deem it prudent, under

present circumstances, to venture into Virginia, where Greene would be sure of powerful re-enforcements. North Carolina was in a state of the utmost disorder and confusion; he thought it better to remain in it for a time, and profit by having compelled Greene to abandon it. After giving his troops a day's repose, therefore, he put them once more in motion on the 18th, along the road by which he had pursued Greene. The latter, who was incessantly on the alert, was informed of this retrograde move, by a preconcerted signal; the waving of a white handkerchief, under covert of the opposite bank, by a female patriot.

This changed the game. Lee, with his legion, strengthened by two veteran Maryland companies, and Pickens, with a corps of South Carolina militia, all light troops, were transported across the Dan in the boats, with orders to gain the front of Cornwallis, hover as near as safety would permit, cut off his intercourse with the disaffected parts of the country, and check the rising of the royalists. "If we can but delay him a day or two," said Greene, "he must be ruined." Greene, in the mean while, remained with his main force on the northern bank of the Dan; waiting to ascertain his lordship's real designs, and ready to cross at a moment's warning.

The movements of Cornwallis, for a day or two, were of a dubious nature, designed to perplex his opponents; on the 20th, however, he took post at Hillsborough. Here he erected the royal standard, and issued a proclamation, stating that, whereas it had pleased Divine Providence to prosper the operations of his majesty's arms in driving the rebel army out of the province, he invited all his loyal subjects to hasten to this standard with their arms and ten days' provisions, to assist in suppressing the remains of the rebellion, and re-establishing good order and constitutional government.

By another instrument, all who could raise independent companies were called upon to give in their names at head-quarters, and a bounty in money and lands was promised to those who should enlist under them. The companies thus raised were to be formed into regiments.

These sounding appeals produced but little effect on the people of the surrounding districts. Many hundreds, says Tarleton, rode into camp to talk over the proclamation, inquire the news of the day, and take a view of the king's troops. The generality seemed desirous of peace, but averse from any exertion to procure it. They acknowledged that the Continentals had been chased out of the province, but apprehended they

would soon return. "Some of the most zealous," adds he, "promised to raise companies, and even regiments; but their followers and dependents were slow to enlist." Tarleton himself was forthwith detached with the cavalry and a small body of infantry, to a region of country lying between the Haw and Deep Rivers, to bring on a considerable number of loyalists who were said to be assembling there.

Rumor, in the mean time, had magnified the effect of his lordship's proclamations. Word was brought to Greene, that the Tories were flocking from all quarters to the royal standard. Seven companies, it was said, had been raised in a single day. At this time the re-enforcements to the American camp had been little more than six hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens. Greene saw that at this rate, if Cornwallis were allowed to remain undisturbed, he would soon have complete command of North Carolina; he boldly determined, therefore, to recross the Dan at all hazards with the scanty force at his command, and give his lordship check. In this spirit he broke up his camp and crossed the river on the 23d.

In the mean time, Lee and Pickens, who were scouting the country about Hillsborough, received information of Tarleton's recruiting expedition to the region between the Haw and Deep Rivers. There was no foe they were more eager to cope with; and they resolved to give him a surprise. Having forded the Haw one day about noon, they learnt from a countryman that Tarleton was encamped about three miles off, that his horses were unsaddled, and that every thing indicated confident security. They now pushed on under covert of the woods, prepared to give the bold partisan a blow after his own fashion. Before they reached the place Tarleton had marched on; they captured two of his staff, however, who had remained behind, settling with the people of a farm-house, for supplies furnished to the detachment.

Being informed that Tarleton was to halt for the night at the distance of six miles, they still trusted to surprise him. On the way, however, they had an encounter with a body of three or four hundred mounted royalists, armed with rifles, and commanded by a Colonel Pyle, marching in quest of Tarleton. As Lee with his cavalry was in the advance, he was mistaken for Tarleton, and hailed with loyal acclamations. He favored the mistake, and was taking measures to capture the royalists, when some of them, seeing the infantry under Pickens, discovered their error and fired upon the rear-guard. The cavalry instantly charged upon them; ninety were cut down and slain,

and a great number wounded ; among the latter was Colonel Pyle himself, who took refuge among thickets on the borders of a piece of water which still bears his name. The Americans alleged in excuse for the slaughter, that it was provoked by their being attacked ; and that the sabre was used, as a continued firing might alarm Tarleton's camp. We do not wonder, however, that British writers pronounced it a massacre ; though it was but following the example set by Tarleton himself, in this ruthless campaign.

After all, Lee and Pickens missed the object of their enterprise. The approach of night and the fatigue of their troops, made them defer their attack upon Tarleton until morning. In the mean time, the latter had received an express from Cornwallis, informing him that Greene had passed the Dan, and ordering him to return to Hillsborough as soon as possible. He hastened to obey. Lee with his legion was in the saddle before daybreak ; but Tarleton's troops were already on the march. "The legion," writes Lee, "accustomed to night expeditions, had been in the habit of using pine-torch for flambeau. Supplied with this, though the morning was dark, the enemy's trail was distinctly discovered, whenever a divergency took place in his route.

Before sunrise, however, Tarleton had forded the Haw. and "Light-horse Harry" gave over the pursuit, consoling himself that though he had not effected the chief object of his enterprise, a secondary one was completely executed, which would repress the tory spirit just beginning to burst forth. "Fortune," writes he in his magniloquent way, "Fortune, which sways so imperiously the affairs of war, demonstrated throughout the operation its supreme control.<sup>1</sup> Nothing was omitted on the part of the Americans, to give to the expedition the desired termination ; but the very bright prospects which for a time presented themselves, were suddenly overcast ;—the capricious goddess gave us Pyle and saved Tarleton."

The reappearance of Greene and his army in North Carolina, heralded by the scourgings of Lee and Pickens, disconcerted the schemes of Lord Cornwallis. The recruiting service was interrupted. Many royalists who were on the way to his camp returned home. Forage and provisions became scarce in the neighborhood. He found himself, he said, "amongst timid friends and adjoining to inveterate rebels." On the 26th, therefore, he abandoned Hillsborough, threw himself across the

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<sup>1</sup> Lee's *Memories of the War*, i. 319.

**Haw**, and encamped near Alamance Creek, one of its principal tributaries, in a country favorable to supplies and with a tory population. His position was commanding, at the point of concurrence of roads from Salisbury, Guilford, High Rockford, Cross Creek, and Hillsborough. It covered also the communication with Wilmington, where a depot of military stores, so important to his half-destitute army, had recently been established.

Greene, with his main army, took post about fifteen miles above him, on the heights between Troublesome Creek and Reedy Fork, one of the tributaries of the Haw. His plan was to cut the enemy off from the upper counties; to harass him by skirmishes, but to avoid a general battle; thus gaining time for the arrival of re-enforcements daily expected. He rarely lay more than two days in a place, and kept his light troops under Pickens and Williams between him and the enemy; hovering about the latter; intercepting his intelligence; attacking his foraging parties, and striking at his flanks whenever exposed. Sharp skirmishes occurred between them and Tarleton's cavalry with various success. The country being much of a wilderness, obliged both parties to be on the alert; but the Americans, accustomed to bush-fighting, were not easily surprised.

On the 6th of March, Cornwallis, learning that the light troops under Williams were very carelessly posted, put his army suddenly in motion, and crossed the Alamance in a thick fog; with the design to beat up their quarters, drive them in upon the main army, and bring Greene to action should he come to their assistance. His movement was discovered by the American patrols, and the alarm given. Williams hastily called in his detachments, and retreated with his light troops across Reedy Fork, while Lee with his legion manœuvred in front of the enemy. A stand was made by the Americans at Wetzell's Mill, but they were obliged to retire with the loss of fifty killed and wounded. Cornwallis did not pursue; evening was approaching, and he had failed in his main object; that of bringing Greene to action. The latter, fixed in his resolve of avoiding a conflict, had retreated across the Haw, in order to keep up his communication with the roads by which he expected his supplies and re-enforcements. The militia of the country, who occasionally flocked to his camp were chiefly volunteers, who fell off after every skirmish, "going home," as he said, "to tell the news." "At this time," said he on the 10th, "I have not above eight or nine hundred of them in



the field; yet there have been upwards of five thousand in motion in the course of four weeks. A force fluctuating in this manner can promise but slender hopes of success against an enemy in high discipline, and made formidable by the superiority of their numbers. Hitherto, I have been obliged to effect that by finesse which I dare not attempt by force.”<sup>1</sup>

Greene had scarcely written this letter when the long-expected re-enforcements arrived, having been hurried on by forced marches. They consisted of a brigade of Virginia militia, under General Lawson, two brigades of North Carolina militia, under Generals Butler and Eaton, and four hundred regulars, enlisted for eighteen months. His whole effective force, according to official returns, amounted to four thousand two hundred and forty-three foot, and one hundred and sixty-one cavalry. Of his infantry, not quite two thousand were regulars, and of these, three-fourths were new levies. His force nearly doubled in number that of Cornwallis, which did not exceed two thousand four hundred men; but many of Greene's troops were raw and inexperienced, and had never been in battle; those of the enemy were veterans, schooled in warfare, and, as it were, welded together by campaigning in a foreign land, where their main safety consisted in standing by each other.

Greene knew the inferiority of his troops in this respect; his re-enforcements, too, fell far short of what he had been led to expect, yet he determined to accept the battle which had so long been offered. The corps of light troops, under Williams, which had rendered such efficient service, was now incorporated with the main body, and all detachments were ordered to assemble at Guilford, within eight miles of the enemy, where he encamped on the 14th, sending his wagons and heavy baggage to the Iron Works at Troublesome Creek, ten miles in his rear.

Cornwallis, from the difficulty of getting correct information, and from Greene's frequent change of position, had an exaggerated idea of the American force, rating it as high as eight thousand men: still he trusted in his well-seasoned veterans, and determined to attack Greene in his encampment, now that he seemed disposed for a general action. To provide against the possibility of a retreat, he sent his carriages and baggage to Bell's Mills, on Deep River, and set out at day-break on the 15th for Guilford.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Governor Jefferson, March 10.

Within four miles of that place, near the New Garden meeting-house, Tarleton with the advanced guard of cavalry, infantry, and yagers, came upon the American advanced guard, composed of Lee's partisan legion, and some mountaineers and Virginia militia. Tarleton and Lee were well matched in military prowess, and the skirmish between them was severe. Lee's horses, being from Virginia and Pennsylvania, were superior in weight and strength to those of his opponent, which had been chiefly taken from plantations in South Carolina. The latter were borne down by a charge in close column; several of their riders were dismounted, and killed or taken prisoners. Tarleton, seeing that his weakly mounted men fought to a disadvantage, sounded a retreat; Lee endeavored to cut him off: a general conflict of the vanguards, horse and foot, ensued, when the appearance of the main body of the enemy obliged Lee, in his turn, to retire with precipitation.

During this time, Greene was preparing for action on a woody eminence, a little more than a mile south of Guilford Court-house. The neighboring country was covered with forest, excepting some cultivated fields about the court-house, and along the Salisbury road, which passed through the centre of the place, from south to north.

Greene had drawn out his troops in three lines. The first, composed of North Carolina militia, volunteers and riflemen, under Generals Butler and Eaton, was posted behind a fence, with an open field in front, and woods on the flanks and in the rear. About three hundred yards behind this, was the second line, composed of Virginia militia, under Generals Stevens and Lawson, drawn up across the road, and covered by a wood. The third line, about four hundred yards in the rear of the second, was composed of Continental troops or regulars; those of Virginia under General Huger on the right, those of Maryland under Colonel Williams on the left. Colonel Washington with a body of dragoons, Kirkwood's Delaware infantry, and a battalion of Virginia militia covered the right flank; Lee's legion, with the Virginia riflemen under Colonel Campbell, covered the left. Two six-pounders were in the road, in advance of the first line; two field-pieces with the rear line near the court-house, where General Greene took his station.

About noon the head of the British army was descried advancing spiritedly from the south along the Salisbury road, and defiling into the fields. A cannonade was opened from the two six-pounders, in front of the first American line. It was answered by the British artillery. Neither produced much

effect. The enemy now advanced coolly and steadily in three columns; the Hessians and Highlanders under General Leslie, on the right, the Royal Artillery and Guards in the centre, and Webster's brigade on the left. The North Carolinians, who formed the first line, waited until the enemy were within one hundred and fifty yards, when, agitated by their martial array and undaunted movement, they began to fall into confusion; some fired off their pieces without taking aim; others threw them down, and took to flight. A volley from the foe, a shout, and a charge of the bayonet, completed their discomfiture. Some fled to the woods, others fell back upon the Virginians, who formed the second line. General Stevens, who commanded the latter, ordered his men to open and let the fugitives pass, pretending that they had orders to retire. He had taken care, however, to post forty riflemen in the rear of his own line, with orders to fire upon any one who should leave his post. Under his spirited command and example, the Virginians kept their ground and fought bravely.

The action became much broken up and diversified by the extent of the ground. The thickness of the woods impeded the movements of the cavalry. The reserves on both sides were called up. The British bayonet again succeeded: the second line gave way, and General Stevens, who had kept the field for some time, after being wounded in the thigh by a musket-ball, ordered a retreat.

The enemy pressed with increasing ardor against the third line, composed of Continental troops, and supported by Colonel Washington's dragoons and Kirkwood's Delawares. Greene counted on these to retrieve the day. They were regulars; they were fresh, and in perfect order. He rode along the line, calling on them to stand firm, and give the enemy a warm reception.

The first Maryland regiment which was on the right wing, was attacked by Colonel Webster, with the British left. It stood the shock bravely, and being seconded by some Virginia troops, and Kirkwood's Delawares, drove Webster across a ravine. The second Maryland regiment was not so successful. Impetuously attacked by Colonel Stewart, with a battalion of the guards, and a company of grenadiers, it faltered, gave way and fled, abandoning two field-pieces, which were seized by the enemy. Stewart was pursuing, when the first regiment which had driven Webster across the ravine, came to the rescue with fixed bayonets, while Colonel Washington spurred up with his cavalry. The fight now was fierce and bloody. Stewart wa

slain ; the two field-pieces were retaken, and the enemy in their turn gave way and were pursued with slaughter ; a destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's artillery checked the pursuit. Two regiments approached on the right and left ; Webster recrossed the ravine and fell upon Kirkwood's Delawares. There was intrepid fighting in different parts of the field ; but Greene saw that the day was lost ; there was no retrieving the effect produced by the first flight of the North Carolinians. Unwilling to risk the utter destruction of his army, he directed a retreat, which was made in good order, but they had to leave their artillery on the field, most of the horses having been killed. About three miles from the field of action he made a halt to collect stragglers, and then continued on to the place of rendezvous at Speedwell's Iron Works on Troublesome Creek.

The British were too much cut up and fatigued to follow up their victory. Two regiments with Tarleton's cavalry attempted a pursuit, but were called back. Efforts were made to collect the wounded of both armies, but they were dispersed over so wide a space, among woods and thickets, that night closed before the task was accomplished. It was a dismal night even to the victors ; a night of unusual darkness, with torrents of rain. The army was destitute of tents ; there were not sufficient houses in the vicinity to receive the wounded : provisions were scanty ; many had tasted very little food for the last two days ; comforts were out of the question. Nearly fifty of the wounded sank under their aggravated miseries, and expired before morning. The cries of the disabled and dying, who remained on the field of battle, during the night, exceeded all description. Such a complicated scene of horror and distress, adds the British writer, whose words we quote, it is hoped, for the sake of humanity, rarely occurs, even in military life.<sup>1</sup>

The loss of the Americans in this hard-fought affair, was never fully ascertained. Their official returns, made immediately after the action, give little more than four hundred killed and wounded, and between eight and nine hundred missing ; but Lord Cornwallis states in his despatches, that between two and three hundred of the Americans were found dead on the field of battle.

The loss sustained by his lordship, even if numerically less, was far more fatal ; for, in the circumstances in which he was placed, it was not to be supplied, and it completely maimed him. Of his small army, ninety-three had fallen, four hundred

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<sup>1</sup> Stedman, vol. ii. p. 346.

and thirteen were wounded, and twenty-six missing. Among the killed and wounded were several officers of note. Thus, one-fourth of his army was either killed or disabled; his troops were exhausted by fatigue and hunger; his camp was encumbered by the wounded. His victory, in fact, was almost as ruinous as a defeat.

Greene lay for two days within ten miles of him, near the Iron Works on Troublesome Creek, gathering up his scattered troops. He had imbibed the spirit of Washington, and remained undismayed by hardships or reverses. Writing to the latter, he says: "Lord Cornwallis will not give up this country without being soundly beaten. I wish our force was more competent to the business. But I am in hopes, by little and little, to reduce him in time. His troops are good, well found, and fight with great obstinacy.

"Virginia," adds he, "has given me every support I could wish or expect, since Lord Cornwallis has been in North Carolina; and nothing has contributed more to this, than the prejudice of the people in favor of your Excellency, which has extended to me from the friendship you have been pleased to honor me with."<sup>1</sup>

And again: "The service here is extremely severe, and the officers and soldiers bear it with a degree of patience that does them the highest honor. I have never taken off my clothes since I left the Pedee. I was taken with a fainting last night, owing, I suppose, to excessive fatigue and constant watching. I am better to-day, but far from well. — I have little prospect of acquiring much reputation while I labor under so many disadvantages. I hope my friends will make full allowances; and as for vulgar opinion, I regard it not."

In Washington he had a friend whose approbation was dearer to him than the applause of thousands, and who knew how to appreciate him. To Greene's account of the battle he sent a cheering reply. "Although the honors of the field do not fall to your lot, I am convinced you deserve them. The chances of war are various, and the best concerted measures and most flattering prospects may, and often do deceive us, especially while we are in the power of the militia. The motives which induced you to risk an action with Lord Cornwallis are supported upon the best military principle, and the consequence, if you can prevent the dissipation of your troops, will no doubt be fortunate."

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks. *Correspondence of the Revolution*, iii. 267.

The consequence, it will be found, was such as Washington, with his usual sagacity, predicted. Cornwallis, so far from being able to advance in the career of victory, could not even hold the ground he had so bravely won, but was obliged to retreat from the scene of triumph, to some secure position where he might obtain supplies for his famished army.

Leaving, therefore, about seventy of his officers and men, who were too severely wounded to bear travelling, together with a number of wounded Americans, in the New Garden meeting-house, and the adjacent buildings, under the protection of a flag of truce, and placing the rest of his wounded in wagons or on horseback, he set out, on the third day after the action, by easy marches, for Cross Creek, otherwise called the Haw, an eastern branch of Cape Fear River, where was a settlement of Scottish Highlanders, stout adherents, as he was led to believe, to the royal cause. Here he expected to be plentifully supplied with provisions, and to have his sick and wounded well taken care of. Hence, too, he could open a communication by Cape Fear River, with Wilmington, and obtain from the depot recently established there, such supplies as the country about Cross Creek did not afford.

On the day on which he began his march, he issued a proclamation, setting forth his victory, calling upon all loyal subjects to join his standard, and holding out the usual promises and threats to such as should obey or should continue in rebellion.

No sooner did Greene learn that Cornwallis was retreating, than he set out to follow him, determined to bring him again to action; and presenting the singular spectacle of the vanquished pursuing the victor. His troops, however, suffered greatly in this pursuit, from wintry weather, deep, wet, clayey roads, and scarcity of provisions; the country through which they marched being completely exhausted; but they harassed the enemy's rear-guard with frequent skirmishes.

On the 28th, Greene arrived at Ramsey's Mills, on Deep River, hard on the traces of Cornwallis, who had left the place a few hours previously, with such precipitation, that several of his wounded, who had died while on the march, were left behind unburied. Several fresh quarters of beef had likewise been forgotten, and were seized upon with eagerness by the hungry soldiery. Such had been the urgency of the pursuit this day, that many of the American troops sank upon the road exhausted with fatigue.

At Deep River, Greene was brought to a stand. Cornwallis

had broken down the bridge by which he had crossed; and further pursuit for the present was impossible. The constancy of the militia now gave way. They had been continually on the march with little to eat, less to drink, and obliged to sleep in the woods in the midst of smoke. Every step had led them from their homes and increased their privations. They were now in want of every thing, for the retreating enemy left a famished country behind him. The term for which most of them had enlisted was expired, and they now demanded their discharge. The demand was just and reasonable, and, after striving in vain to shake their determination, Greene felt compelled to comply with it. His force thus reduced, it would be impossible to pursue the enemy further. The halt he was obliged to make to collect provisions and rebuild the bridge, would give them such a start as to leave no hope of overtaking them should they continue their retreat; nor could he fight them upon equal terms should they make a stand. The regular troops would be late in the field, if raised at all: Virginia, from the unequal operation of the law for drafting, was not likely to furnish many soldiers: Maryland, as late as the 13th instant, had not got a man; neither was there the least prospect of raising a man in North Carolina. In this situation, remote from re-enforcements, inferior to the enemy in numbers, and without hope of support, what was to be done? "If the enemy falls down toward Wilmington," said he, "they will be in a position where it would be impossible for us to injure them if we had a force."<sup>1</sup> Suddenly he determined to change his course, and carry the war into South Carolina. This would oblige the enemy either to follow him, and thus abandon North Carolina; or to sacrifice all his posts in the upper part of North Carolina and Georgia. To Washington, to whom he considered himself accountable for all his policy, and from whose counsel he derived confidence and strength, he writes on the present occasion. "All things considered, I think the movement is warranted by the soundest reasons, both political and military. The manœuvre will be critical and dangerous, and the troops exposed to every hardship. But as I share it with them, I may hope they will bear up under it with that magnanimity which has always supported them, and for which they deserve every thing of their country." — "I shall take every measure," adds he, "to avoid a misfortune. But necessity obliges me to commit myself to

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<sup>1</sup> Greene to Washington. Cor. Rev. iii. 278.

chance, and, I trust, my friends will do justice to my reputation, if any accident attend me."

In this brave spirit he apprised Sumter, Pickens, and Marion, by letter, of his intentions, and called upon them to be ready to co-operate with all the militia they could collect; promising to send forward cavalry and small detachments of light infantry, to aid them in capturing outposts before the army should arrive.

To Lafayette he writes at the same time, "I expect by this movement to draw Cornwallis out of the State, *and prevent him from forming a junction with Arnold*. If you follow to support me, it is not impossible that we may give him a drubbing, especially if General Wayne comes up with the Pennsylvanians."

In pursuance of his plan, Greene, on the 30th of March, discharged all his militia with many thanks for the courage and fortitude with which they had followed him through so many scenes of peril and hardship; and joyously did the poor fellows set out for their homes. Then, after giving his "little, distressed, though successful army," a short taste of the repose they needed, and having collected a few days' provision, he set forward on the 5th of April towards Camden, where Lord Rawdon had his head-quarters.

Cornwallis, in the mean time, was grievously disappointed in the hopes he had formed of obtaining ample provisions and forage at Cross Creek, and strong re-enforcements from the royalists in the neighborhood. Neither could he open a communication by Cape Fear River, for the conveyance of his troops to Wilmington. The distance by water was upwards of a hundred miles, the breadth of the river seldom above one hundred yards, the banks high, and the inhabitants on each side generally hostile. He was compelled, therefore, to continue his retreat by land, quite to Wilmington, where he arrived on the 7th of April, and his troops, weary, sick and wounded, rested for the present from the "unceasing toils and unspeakable hardships, which they had undergone during the past three months."<sup>1</sup>

It was his lordship's intention, as soon as he should have equipped his own corps and received a part of the expected re-enforcements from Ireland, to return to the upper country, in hopes of giving protection to the royal interests in South Carolina, and of preserving the health of his troops until he should

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<sup>1</sup> See Letter of Cornwallis to Lord G. Germain, April 18. Also Ann. Register, 1781, p. 72.



concert new measures with Sir Henry Clinton.<sup>1</sup> His plans were all disconcerted, however, by intelligence of Greene's rapid march towards Camden. Never, we are told, was his lordship more affected than by this news. "My situation here is very distressing," writes he. "Greene took the advantage of my being obliged to come to this place, and has marched to South Carolina. My expresses to Lord Rawdon on my leaving Cross Creek, warning him of the possibility of such a movement, have all failed; the mountaineers and militia have poured into the back part of that province, and I much fear that Lord Rawdon's posts will be so distant from each other, and his troops so scattered, as to put him into the greatest danger of being beaten in detail, and that the worst of consequences may happen to most of the troops out of Charleston."<sup>2</sup>

It was too late for his lordship to render any aid by a direct move towards Camden. Before he could arrive there, Greene would have made an attack; if successful, his lordship's army might be hemmed in among the great rivers, in an exhausted country, revolutionary in its spirit, where Greene might cut off their subsistence, and render their arms useless.

All thoughts of offensive operations against North Carolina were at an end. Sickness, desertion, and the loss sustained at Guilford Court-house, had reduced his little army to fourteen hundred and thirty-five men.

In this sad predicament, after remaining several days in a painful state of irresolution, he determined to take advantage of Greene's having left the back part of Virginia open, to march directly into that province, and attempt a junction with the force acting there under General Phillips.

By this move, he might draw Greene back to the northward, and by the reduction of Virginia, he might promote the subjugation of the South. The move, however, he felt to be perilous. His troops were worn down by upwards of eight hundred miles of marching and counter-marching through an inhospitable and impracticable country; they had now three hundred more before them; under still worse circumstances than those in which they first set out; for so destitute were they, notwithstanding the supplies received at Wilmington, that his lordship, sadly humorous, declared, "his cavalry wanted every thing, and infantry every thing but shoes."<sup>3</sup>

There was no time for hesitation or delay; Greene might return and render the junction with Phillips impracticable: having

<sup>1</sup> Answer to Clinton's Narrative. Introduction, p. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Major-General Phillips.

<sup>3</sup> Annual Register, 1781, p. 90.

sent an express to the latter, therefore, informing him of his coming, and appointing a meeting at Petersburg, his lordship set off on the 25th of April, on his fated march into Virginia.

We must now step back in dates to bring up events in the more northern parts of the Union.

## CHAPTER XLI.

ARNOLD AT PORTSMOUTH IN VIRGINIA — EXPEDITIONS SENT AGAINST HIM — INSTRUCTIONS TO LAFAYETTE — WASHINGTON AT NEWPORT — CONSULTATIONS WITH DE ROCHAMBEAU — SAILING OF THE FRENCH FLEET — PURSUED BY THE ENGLISH — EXPEDITION OF LAFAYETTE TO VIRGINIA — ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH FLEETS — FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION AGAINST ARNOLD — LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO COLONET LAURENS — MEASURES TO RE-ENFORCE GREENE — GENERAL PHILLIPS IN COMMAND AT PORTSMOUTH — MARAUDS THE COUNTRY — CHECKED BY LAFAYETTE — MOUNT VERNON MENACED — DEATH OF PHILLIPS.

IN a former chapter we left Benedict Arnold fortifying himself at Portsmouth, after his ravaging incursion. At the solicitation of Governor Jefferson, backed by Congress, the Chevalier de la Luzerne had requested the French commander at the eastward to send a ship of the line and some frigates to Chesapeake Bay to oppose the traitor. Fortunately, at this juncture a severe snow-storm (January 22) scattered Arbuthnot's blockading squadron, wrecking one ship of the line and dismasting others, and enabled the French fleet at Newport to look abroad; and Rochambeau wrote to Washington that the Chevalier Destouches, who commanded the fleet, proposed to send three or four ships to the Chesapeake.

Washington feared the position of Arnold, and his well-known address, might enable him to withstand a mere attack by sea; anxious to insure his capture, he advised that Destouches should send his whole fleet; and that De Rochambeau should embark about a thousand men on board of it, with artillery and apparatus for a siege; engaging, on his own part, to send on immediately a detachment of twelve hundred men to co-operate. "The destruction of the corps under the command of Arnold," writes he, "is of such immense importance to the welfare of the Southern States, that I have resolved to attempt it with the

detachment I now send in conjunction with the militia, even if it should not be convenient for your Excellency to detach a part of your force ; provided M. Destouches is able to protect our operations by such a disposition of his fleet as will give us the command of the bay, and prevent succors from being sent from New York."

Before the receipt of this letter, the French commanders, acting on their first impulse, had, about the 9th of February, detached M. de Tilly, with a sixty-gun ship and two frigates, to make a dash into the Chesapeake. Washington was apprised of their sailing just as he was preparing to send off the twelve hundred men spoken of in his letter to De Rochambeau. He gave the command of this detachment to Lafayette, instructing him to act in conjunction with the militia and the ships sent by Destouches, against the enemy's corps actually in Virginia. As the case was urgent, he was to suffer no delay, when on the march, for want either of provisions, forage, or wagons, but where ordinary means did not suffice, he was to resort to military impress. "You are to do no act whatever with Arnold," said the letter of instruction, "that directly or by implication may screen him from the punishment due to his treason and desertion, which, if he should fall into your hands, you will execute in the most summary manner."

Washington wrote at the same time to the Baron Steuben, informing him of the arrangements, and requesting him to be on the alert. "If the fleet should have arrived before this gets to hand," said he, "secrecy will be out of the question ; if not, you will conceal your expectations, and only seem to be preparing for defence. Arnold, on the appearance of the fleet, may endeavor to retreat through North Carolina. If you take any measure to obviate this, the precaution will be advisable. Should you be able to capture this detachment with its chief, it will be an event as pleasing as it will be useful."

Lafayette set out on his march on the 22d of February, and Washington was indulging the hope that, scanty as was the naval force sent to the Chesapeake, the combined enterprise might be successful, when, on the 27th, he received a letter from the Count de Rochambeau announcing its failure. De Tilly had made his dash into Chesapeake Bay, but Arnold had been apprised by the British Admiral Arbuthnot of his approach, and had drawn his ships high up Elizabeth River. The water was too shallow for the largest French ships to get within four leagues of him. One of De Tilly's frigates ran aground, and was got off with difficulty, and that commander,

seeing that Arnold was out of his reach, and fearing to be himself blockaded should he linger, put to sea and returned to Newport; having captured during his cruise a British frigate of forty-four guns, and two privateers with their prizes.

The French commanders now determined to follow the plan suggested by Washington, and operate in the Chesapeake with their whole fleet and a detachment of land troops, being, as they said, disposed to risk every thing to hinder Arnold from establishing himself at Portsmouth.

Washington set out for Newport to concert operations with the French commanders. Before his departure, he wrote to Lafayette, on the 1st of March, giving him intelligence of these intentions, and desiring him to transmit it to the Baron Steuben. "I have received a letter," adds he, "from General Greene, by which it appears that Cornwallis, with twenty-five hundred men, was penetrating the country with very great rapidity, and Greene with a much inferior force retiring before him, having determined to pass the Roanoke. This intelligence, and an apprehension that Arnold may make his escape before the fleet can arrive in the bay, induces me to give you greater latitude than you had in your original instructions. You are at liberty to concert a plan with the French general and naval commander for a descent into North Carolina, to cut off the detachment of the enemy which had ascended Cape Fear River, intercept, if possible, Cornwallis, and relieve General Greene and the Southern States. This, however, ought to be a secondary object, attempted in case of Arnold's retreat to New York; or in case his reduction should be attended with too much delay. There should be strong reasons to induce a change of our first plan against Arnold if he is still in Virginia.

Washington arrived at Newport on the 6th of March, and found the French fleet ready for sea, the troops eleven hundred strong, commanded by General the Baron de Viomenil, being already embarked.

Washington went immediately on board of the admiral's ship, where he had an interview with the Count de Rochambeau, and arranged the plan of the campaign. Returning on shore he was received by the inhabitants with enthusiastic demonstrations of affection; and was gratified to perceive the harmony and good-will between them and the French army and fleet. Much of this he attributed to the wisdom of the commanders, and the discipline of the troops, but more to magnanimity on the one part, and gratitude on the other; and he hailed it as a happy presage of lasting friendship between the two nations.

On the 8th of March, at ten o'clock at night, he writes to Lafayette: "I have the pleasure to inform you that the whole fleet went out with a fair wind this evening about sunset. We have not heard of any more of the British in Gardiner's Bay. Should we luckily meet with no interruption from them, and Arnold should continue in Virginia, until the arrival of M. Destouches, I flatter myself you will meet with that success which I most ardently wish, not only on the public, but your own account.

The British fleet made sail in pursuit, on the morning of the 10th; as the French had so much the start, it was hoped they would reach Chesapeake Bay before them. Washington felt the present to be a most important moment. "The success of the expedition now in agitation," said he, "seems to depend upon a naval superiority, and the force of the two fleets is so equal, that we must rather hope for, than entertain an assurance of victory. The attempt, however, made by our allies to dislodge the enemy in Virginia, is a bold one, and should it fail, will nevertheless entitle them to the thanks of the public."

On returning to his head-quarters at New Windsor, Washington on the 20th of March found letters from General Greene, informing him that he had saved all his baggage, artillery, and stores, notwithstanding the hot pursuit of the enemy, and was now in his turn following them, but that he was greatly in need of re-enforcements.

"My regard for the public good, and my inclination to promote your success," writes Washington in reply, "will prompt me to give every assistance, and to make every diversion in your favor. But what can I do if I am not furnished with the means? From what I saw and learned while at the eastward, I am convinced the levies will be late in the field, and I fear far short of the requisition. I most anxiously wait the event of the present operation in Virginia. If attended with success, it may have the happiest influence on our southern affairs, by leaving the forces of Virginia free to act. For while there is an enemy in the heart of a country, you can expect neither men nor supplies from it, in that full and regular manner in which they ought to be given."

In the mean time, Lafayette with his detachment was pressing forward by forced marches for Virginia. Arriving at the Head of Elk on the 3d of March, he halted until he should receive tidings respecting the French fleet. A letter from Baron Steuben spoke of the preparations he was making, and the facility of taking the fortifications of Portsmouth. "a sword in hand." The youthful marquis was not so sanguine as the

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veteran baron. "Arnold," said he, "has had so much time to prepare, and plays so deep a game; nature has made the position so respectable, and some of the troops under his orders have been in so many actions, that I do not flatter myself to succeed so easily." On the 7th he received Washington's letter of the 1st, apprising him of the approaching departure of the whole fleet with land forces. Lafayette now conducted his troops by water to Annapolis, and concluding, from the time the ships were to sail, and the winds which had since prevailed, the French fleet must be already in the Chesapeake, he crossed the bay in an open boat to Virginia, and pushed on to confer with the American and French commanders; get a convoy for his troops, and concert matters for a vigorous co-operation. Arriving at York on the 14th, he found the Baron Steuben in the bustle of military preparations, and confident of having five thousand militia ready to co-operate. These, with Lafayette's detachment, would be sufficient for the attack by land; nothing was wanting but a co-operation by sea; and the French fleet had not yet appeared, though double the time necessary for the voyage had elapsed. The marquis repaired to General Muhlenburg's camp near Suffolk, and reconnoitred with him the enemy's works at Portsmouth; this brought on a trifling skirmish, but every thing appeared satisfactory; every thing promised complete success.

On the 20th, word was brought that a fleet had come to anchor within the capes. It was supposed of course to be the French, and now the capture of the traitor was certain. He himself from certain signs appeared to be in great confusion; none of his ships ventured down the bay. An officer of the French navy bore down to visit the fleet, but returned with the astounding intelligence that it was British!

Admiral Arbuthnot had in fact overtaken Destouches on the 16th of March, off the capes of Virginia. Their forces were nearly equal; eight ships of the line, and four frigates on each side, the French having more men, the English more guns. An engagement took place which lasted about an hour. The British van at first took the brunt of the action, and was severely handled; the centre came up to its relief. The French line was broken and gave way, but rallied, and formed again at some distance. The crippled state of some of his ships prevented the British admiral from bringing on a second encounter; nor did the French seek one, but shaped their course the next day back to Newport. Both sides claimed a victory. The British certainly effected the main objects they

had in view; the French were cut off from the Chesapeake; the combined enterprise against Portsmouth was disconcerted, and Arnold was saved. Great must have been the apprehensions of the traitor, while that enterprise threatened to entrap him. He knew the peculiar peril impending over him; it had been announced in the sturdy reply of an American prisoner to his inquiry what his countrymen would do to him if he were captured.—“They would cut off the leg wounded in the service of your country and bury it with the honors of war; the rest of you they would hang!”

The feelings of Washington, on hearing of the result of the enterprise, may be judged from the following passage of a letter to Colonel John Laurens, then minister at Paris. “The failure of this expedition, which was most flattering in the commencement, is much to be regretted; because a successful blow in that quarter would, in all probability, have given a decisive turn to our affairs in all the Southern States; because it has been attended with considerable expense on our part, and much inconvenience to the State of Virginia, by the assembling of our militia; because the world is disappointed at not seeing Arnold in gibbets; and above all, because we stood in need of something to keep us afloat till the result of your mission is known; for be assured, my dear Laurens, day does not follow night more certainly, than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war, without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion, that, without a foreign loan, our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased, and in readiness for another. . . . If France delays a timely and powerful aid in the critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the balance; not from choice, but from hard and absolute necessity; and you may rely on it as a fact, that we cannot transport the provisions from the States in which they are assessed, to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters, who will no longer work for certificates. . . . In a word, we are at the end of our tether, and now or never our deliverance must come. . . . How easy would it be to retort the enemy’s own game upon them; if it could be made to comport with the general plan of the war, to keep a superior fleet always in these seas, and France would put us in condition to be active,

by advancing us money. The ruin of the enemy's schemes would then be certain; the bold game they are now playing would be the means of effecting it; for they would be reduced to the necessity of concentrating their force at capital points; thereby giving up all the advantages they have gained in the Southern States, or be vulnerable everywhere."

Washington's anxiety was now awakened for the safety of General Greene. Two thousand troops had sailed from New York under General Phillips, probably to join with the force under Arnold, and proceed to re-enforce Cornwallis. Should they form a junction, Greene would be unable to withstand them. With these considerations Washington wrote to Lafayette, urging him, since he was already three hundred miles, which was half the distance, on the way, to push on with all possible speed to join the Southern army, sending expresses ahead to inform Greene of his approach.

The letter found Lafayette on the 8th of April, at the Head of Elk, preparing to march back with his troops to the banks of the Hudson. On his return through Virginia, he had gone out of his way, and travelled all night for the purpose of seeing Washington's mother at Fredericksburg, and paying a visit to Mount Vernon. He now stood ready to obey Washington's orders, and march to re-enforce General Greene; but his troops, who were chiefly from the Eastern States, murmured at the prospect of a campaign in a southern climate, and desertions began to occur. Upon this he announced in general orders, that he was about to enter on an enterprise of great difficulty and danger, in which he trusted his soldiers would not abandon him. Any, however, who were unwilling, should receive permits to return home.

As he had anticipated, their pride was roused by this appeal. All engaged to continue forward. So great was the fear of appearing a laggard, or a craven, that a sergeant, too lame to march, hired a place in a cart to keep up with the army. In the zeal of the moment, Lafayette borrowed money on his own credit from the Baltimore merchants, to purchase summer clothing for his troops, in which he was aided, too, by the ladies of the city, with whom he was deservedly popular.

The detachment from New York, under General Phillips, arrived at Portsmouth on the 26th of March. That officer immediately took command, greatly to the satisfaction of the British officers, who had been acting under Arnold. The force now collected there amounted to three thousand five hundred men. The garrison of New York had been greatly weakened



In furnishing this detachment, but Cornwallis had urged the policy of transferring the seat of war to Virginia, even at the expense of abandoning New York ; declaring that until that State was subdued, the British hold upon the Carolinas must be difficult, if not precarious.

The disparity in force was now so great, that the Baron Steuben had to withdraw his troops, and remove the military stores into the interior. Many of the militia, too, their term of three months being expired, stacked their arms, and set off for their homes, and most of the residue had to be discharged.

General Phillips had hitherto remained quiet in Portsmouth, completing the fortifications, but evidently making preparations for an expedition. On the 16th of April, he left one thousand men in garrison, and, embarking the rest in small vessels of light draught, proceeded up James River, destroying armed vessels, public magazines, and a ship-yard belonging to the State.

Landing at City Point, he advanced against Petersburg, a place of deposit of military stores and tobacco. He was met about a mile below the town by about one thousand militia, under General Muhlenburg, who, after disputing the ground inch by inch for nearly two hours, with considerable loss on both sides, retreated across the Appomattox, breaking down the bridge behind them.

Phillips entered the town, set fire to the tobacco warehouses, and destroyed all the vessels lying in the river. Repairing and crossing the bridge over the Appomattox, he proceeded to Chesterfield Court-house, where he destroyed barracks and public stores ; while Arnold, with a detachment laid waste the magazines of tobacco in the direction of Warwick. A fire was opened by the latter from a few field-pieces on the river bank upon a squadron of small armed vessels, which had been intended to co-operate with the French fleet against Portsmouth. The crews scuttled or set fire to them, and escaped to the north side of the river.

This destructive course was pursued until they arrived at Manchester, a small place opposite Richmond, where the tobacco warehouses were immediately in a blaze. Richmond was a leading object of this desolating enterprise, for there a great part of the military stores of the State had been collected. Fortunately, Lafayette, with his detachment of two thousand men, had arrived there, by forced marches, the evening before, and being joined by about two thousand militia and sixty dragoons (the latter principally young Virginians of family), had

posted himself strongly on the high banks on the north side of the river.

There being no bridge across the river at that time, General Phillips did not think it prudent to attempt a passage in face of such a force so posted; but was extremely irritated at being thus foiled by the celerity of his youthful opponent, who now assumed the chief command of the American forces in Virginia.

Returning down the south bank of the river, to the place where his vessels awaited him, General Phillips re-embarked on the 2d of May, and dropped slowly down the river below the confluence of the Chickahominy. He was followed cautiously, and his movements watched by Lafayette, who posted himself behind the last-named river.

Despatches from Cornwallis now informed Phillips that his lordship was advancing with all speed from the South to effect a junction with him. The general immediately made a rapid move to regain possession of Petersburg, where the junction was to take place. Lafayette attempted by forced marches to get there before him, but was too late. Falling back, therefore, he recrossed James River and stationed himself some miles below Richmond, to be at hand for the protection of the public stores collected there.

During this main expedition of Phillips, some of his smaller vessels had carried on the plan of plunder and devastation in other of the rivers emptying into the Chesapeake Bay; setting fire to the houses where they met with resistance. One had ascended the Potomac and menaced Mount Vernon. Lund Washington, who had charge of the estate, met the flag which the enemy sent on shore, and saved the property from ravage, by furnishing the vessel with provisions. Lafayette, who heard of the circumstance, and was sensitive for the honor of Washington, immediately wrote to him on the subject. "This conduct of the person who represents you on your estate," writes he, "must certainly produce a bad effect, and contrast with the courageous replies of some of your neighbors, whose houses in consequence have been burnt. You will do what you think proper, my dear general, but friendship makes it my duty to give you confidentially the facts."

Washington, however, had previously received a letter from Lund himself, stating all the circumstances of the case, and had immediately written him a reply. He had no doubt that Lund had acted from his best judgment, and with a view to preserve the property and buildings from impending danger, but he was stung to the quick by the idea that his agent should go on board

of the enemy's vessels, carry them refreshments, and "commune with a parcel of plundering scoundrels," as he termed them. "It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard," writes he, "that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid my plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

In concluding his letter, he expresses his opinion that it was the intention of the enemy to prosecute the plundering plan they had begun; and that it would end in the destruction of his property, but adds, that he is "prepared for the event." He advises his agent to deposit the most valuable and least bulky articles in a place of safety. "Such and so many things as are necessary for common and present use must be retained, and must run their chance through the fiery trial of this summer."

Such were the steadfast purposes of Washington's mind when war was brought home to his door, and threatening his earthly paradise of Mount Vernon.

In the mean time the desolating career of General Phillips was brought to a close. He had been ill for some days previous to his arrival at Petersburg, and by the time he reached there, was no longer capable of giving orders. He died four days afterwards; honored and deeply regretted by his brothers in arms, as a meritorious and well-tried soldier. What made his death to be more sensibly felt by them at this moment, was, that it put the traitor, Arnold, once more in the general command.

He held it, however, but for a short time, as Lord Cornwallis arrived at Petersburg on the 20th of May, after nearly a month's weary marching from Wilmington. His lordship, on taking command, found his force augmented by a considerable detachment of royal artillery, two battalions of light infantry, the 76th and 80th British regiments, a Hessian regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Simcoe's corps of Queen's rangers, cavalry and infantry, one hundred yagers, Arnold's legion of royalists, and the garrison of Portsmouth. He was cheered also by intelligence that Lord Rawdon had obtained an advantage over General Greene before Camden, and that three British regiments had sailed from Cork for Charleston. His mind, we are told, was now set at ease with regard to South-

ern affairs; his spirits, so long jaded by his harassing tramps about the Carolinas, were again lifted up by his augmented strength, and Tarleton assures us, that his lordship indulged in "brilliant hopes of a glorious campaign in those parts of America where he commanded."<sup>1</sup> How far these hopes were realized, we shall show in a future page.

## CHAPTER XLII.

INEFFICIENT STATE OF THE ARMY — MARAUD OF DELANCEY — DEATH OF COLONEL GREENE — ARRIVAL OF THE COUNT DE BARRAS — FRENCH NAVAL FORCE EXPECTED — INTERVIEW OF WASHINGTON AND DE ROCHAMBEAU AT WEATHERSFIELD — PLAN OF COMBINED OPERATIONS — FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT OF ROBERT MORRIS — SCHEME TO ATTACK THE WORKS ON NEW YORK ISLAND AND CAPTURE DELANCEY'S CORPS — ENCAMPMENTS OF AMERICAN AND FRENCH ARMIES IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY — RECONNOITRING EXPEDITIONS.

WHILE affairs were approaching a crisis in Virginia, troubles were threatening from the North. There were rumors of invasion from Canada; of war councils and leagues among the savage tribes; of a revival of the territorial feuds between New York and Vermont. Such, however, was the deplorable inefficiency of the military system, that though, according to the resolves of Congress, there were to have been thirty-seven thousand men under arms at the beginning of the year, Washington's whole force on the Hudson in the month of May did not amount to seven thousand men, of whom little more than four thousand were effective.

He still had his head-quarters at New Windsor, just above the Highlands, and within a few miles of West Point. Here he received intelligence that the enemy were in force on the opposite side of the Hudson, marauding the country on the north side of Croton River, and he ordered a hasty advance of Connecticut troops in that direction.

The Croton River flows from east to west across Westchester County, and formed as it were the barrier of the American lines. The advanced posts of Washington's army guarded it, and by its aid, protected the upper country from the incursions

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<sup>1</sup> Tarleton. *History of the Campaign*, p. 291.

of those foraging parties and marauders which had desolated the neutral ground below it. The incursions most to be guarded against were those of Colonel Delancey's loyalists, a horde of tories and refugees which had their stronghold in Morrisania, and were the terror of the neighboring country. There was a petty war continually going on between them and the American outposts, often of a ruthless kind. Delancey's horse and Delancey's rangers scoured the country, and swept off forage and cattle from its fertile valleys for the British army at New York. Hence they were sometimes stigmatized by the opprobrious appellation of Cow Boys.

The object of their present incursion was to surprise an outpost of the American army stationed near a fordable part of the Croton River, not far from Pine's Bridge. The post was commanded by Colonel Christopher Greene, of Rhode Island, the same who had successfully defended Fort Mercer on the Delaware, when assailed by Count Donop. He was a valuable officer, highly prized by Washington. The enterprise against his post was something like that against the post of Young's House; both had been checks to the foragers of this harassed region.

Colonel Delaney, who led this foray, was successor to the unfortunate André as adjutant-general of the British army. He conducted it secretly, and in the night, at the head of a hundred horse and two hundred foot. The Croton was forded at daybreak, just as the night-guard had been withdrawn, and the farm-houses were surprised and assailed in which the Americans were quartered. That occupied by Colonel Greene and a brother officer, Major Flagg, was first surrounded. The major started from his bed, and discharged his pistols from a window, but was shot through the head, and afterwards despatched by cuts and thrusts of the sabre.

The door of Greene's room was burst open. He defended himself vigorously and effectively with his sword, for he had great strength, but he was overpowered by numbers, cut down, and barbarously mangled. A massacre was going on in other quarters. Besides these two officers, there were between thirty and forty killed and wounded, and several made prisoners.

It is said that Colonel Delancey was not present at the carnage, but remained on the south side of the Croton to secure the retreat of his party. It may be so: but the present exploit was in the spirit of others by which he had contributed to harry this beautiful region, and made it a "bloody ground." No

foes so ruthless had the American patriots to encounter as their own tory countrymen in arms.

Before the troops ordered out by Washington arrived at the post, the marauders had made a precipitate retreat. They had attempted to carry off Greene a prisoner, but he died within three-quarters of a mile of the house. His captors, as they passed by the farm-houses, told the inhabitants that, should there be any inquiry after the colonel, they had left him dead at the edge of the woods.<sup>1</sup>

Greene was but forty-four years of age at the time of his death, and was a model of manly strength and comeliness. A true soldier of the Revolution, he had served at Lexington and Bunker's Hill; followed Arnold through the Kennebec wilderness to Quebec; fought under the walls of that city; distinguished himself by his defence of Fort Mercer on the Delaware, and by his kind treatment of his vanquished and wounded antagonist, Colonel Donop. How different the treatment experienced by him at the hands of his tory countrymen!

The commander-in-chief, we are told, heard with anguish and indignation the tragical fate of this his faithful friend and soldier. On the subsequent day, the corpse of Colonel Greene was brought to head-quarters, and his funeral solemnized with military honors and universal grief.<sup>2</sup>

At this juncture, Washington's attention was called in another direction. A frigate had arrived at Boston, bringing the Count de Barras, to take command of the French naval force. He was a veteran about sixty years of age, and had commanded D'Estaing's vanguard, when he forced the entrance of Newport harbor. The count brought the cheering intelligence, that an armament of twenty ships of the line, with land forces, was to sail, or had sailed, from France, under the Count de Grasse for the West Indies, and that twelve of these ships were to relieve the squadron at Newport, and might be expected on the coast of the United States in July or August.

The Count de Rochambeau, having received despatches from the court of France, now requested an interview with Washington. The latter appointed Weathersfield in Connecticut for the purpose; and met the count there on the 22d of May, hoping to settle a definite plan of the campaign. Both as yet were ignorant of the arrival of Cornwallis in Virginia. The policy of a joint expedition to relieve the Carolinas was discussed. As the French ships in Newport were still blockaded by a superior

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Paymaster Hughes. See Bolton's *Westchester Co.*, vol. II. p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> *Lee's Memoirs of the War*, vol. I. p. 407.

force, such an expedition would have to be made by land. A march to the Southern States was long and harassing, and always attended with a great waste of life. Such would certainly be the case at present, when it would have to be made in the heat of summer. The difficulties and expenses of land transportation, also, presented a formidable objection.

On the other hand, an effective blow might be struck at New York, the garrison having been reduced one-half by detachments to the South. That important post and its dependencies might be wrested from the enemy, or, if not, they might be obliged to recall a part of their force from the South for their own defence.

It was determined, therefore, that the French troops should march from Newport as soon as possible, and form a junction with the American army on the Hudson, and that both should move down to the vicinity of New York to make a combined attack, in which the Count de Grasse should be invited to co-operate with his fleet and a body of land troops.

A vessel was despatched by De Rochambeau, to inform the Count de Grasse of this arrangement; and letters were addressed by Washington to the executive authorities of New Jersey and the New England States, urging them to fill up their battalions and furnish their quotas of provisions. Notwithstanding all his exertions, however, when he mustered his forces at Peekskill, he was mortified to find not more than five thousand effective men. Notwithstanding, too, all the resolutions passed in the legislatures of the various States for supplying the army, it would, at this critical moment, have been destitute of provisions, especially bread, had it not been for the zeal, talents, and activity of Mr. Robert Morris, now a delegate to Congress, from the State of Pennsylvania, and recently appointed superintendent of finance. This patriotic and energetic man, when public means failed, pledged his own credit in transporting military stores and feeding the army. Throughout the Revolution, Washington was continually baffled in the hopes caused by the resolutions of legislative bodies, too often as little alimetary as the east wind.

The Count de Rochambeau and the Duke de Lauzun being arrived with their troops in Connecticut, on their way to join the American army, Washington prepared for spirited operations; quickened by the intelligence that a part of the garrison of New York had been detached to forage the Jerseys. Two objects were contemplated by him: one, the surprisal of the British works at the north end of New York Island; the other,

the capture or destruction of Delancey's corps of refugees in Morrisania. The attack upon the posts was to be conducted by General Lincoln, with a detachment from the main army, which he was to bring down by water—that on Delancey's corps by the Duke de Lauzun with his legion, aided by Sheldon's dragoons, and a body of Connecticut troops. Both operations were to be carried into effect on the 3d of July. The duke was to march down from Ridgebury in Connecticut, for the purpose. Every thing was to be conducted with secrecy and by the way of surprisal. Should any thing occur to prevent Lincoln from attempting the works on New York Island, he was to land his men above Spyt den Duivel Creek, march to the high grounds in front of King's Bridge, lie concealed there until the duke's attack on Delancey's corps should be announced by firing or other means; then to dispose of his force in such manner as to make the enemy think it larger than it really was; thereby deterring troops from coming over the bridge to turn Lauzun's right, while he prevented the escape over the bridge of Delancey's refugees when routed from Morrisania.

Washington, at the same time, wrote a confidential letter to Governor Clinton, informing him of designs upon the enemy's posts. "Should we be happy enough to succeed," writes he, "and be able to hold our conquest, the advantages will be greater than can be imagined. But I cannot flatter myself that the enemy will permit the latter, unless I am suddenly and considerably re-enforced. I shall march down the remainder of this army, and I have hopes that the French force will be near at hand at the time. But I shall, notwithstanding, direct the alarm-guns and beacons to be fired in case of success; and I have to request, that your Excellency will, upon such signals, communicate the meaning of them to the militia, and put yourself at the head of them, and march with the utmost expedition to King's Bridge, bringing with you three or four days' provision at least."

It was a service which would have been exactly to the humor of George Clinton.

In pursuance of the plan, Lincoln left the camp near Peekskill on the 1st, with eight hundred men, and artillery, and proceeded to Teller's Point, where they were embarked in boats with muffled oars, and rowed silently at night down the Tappan Sea, that region of mystery and secret enterprise. At daylight they kept concealed under the land. The Duke de Lauzun was supposed, at the same time, to be on the way from



Connecticut. Washington, at three o'clock on the morning of the 2d, left his tents standing at Peekskill, and commenced his march with his main force, without baggage; making a brief halt at Croton Bridge, about nine miles from Peekskill; another at the Sleepy Hollow Church, near Tarrytown, where he halted until dusk, and completed the rest of his march in the night, to Valentine's Hill, four miles above King's Bridge, where he arrived about sunrise. There he posted himself to cover the detached troops, and improve any advantages that might be gained by them.

Lincoln, on the morning of the 2d, had left his flotilla concealed under the eastern shore, and crossed to Fort Lee to reconnoitre Fort Washington from the cliffs on the opposite side of the Hudson. To his surprise and chagrin, he discovered a British force encamped on the north end of New York Island, and a ship-of-war anchored in the river. In fact, the troops which had been detached into the Jerseys, had returned, and the enemy were on the alert; the surprisal of the forts, therefore, was out of the question.

Lincoln's thoughts now were to aid the Duke de Lauzun's part of the scheme, as he had been instructed. Before daylight of the 3d, he landed his troops above Spyt den Duivel Creek, and took possession of the high ground on the north of Harlem River, where Fort Independence once stood. Here he was discovered by a foraging party of the enemy, fifteen hundred strong, who had sallied out at daybreak to scour the country. An irregular skirmish ensued. The firing was heard by the Duke de Lauzun, who was just arrived with his troops at East Chester, fatigued by a long and forced march in sultry weather. Finding the country alarmed, and all hope of surprising Delancey's corps at an end, he hastened to the support of Lincoln. Washington also advanced with his troops from Valentine's Hill. The British, perceiving their danger, retreated to their boats on the east side of Harlem River, and crossed over to New York Island. A trifling loss in killed and wounded had been sustained on each side, and Lincoln had made a few prisoners.

Being disappointed in both objects, Washington did not care to fatigue his troops any more, but suffered them to remain on their arms, and spent a good part of the day reconnoitring the enemy's works. In the afternoon he retired to Valentine's Hill, and the next day marched to Dobbs' Ferry, where he was joined by the Count de Rochambeau on the 6th of July. The two armies now encamped; the American in two lines, resting on

the Hudson at Dobbs' Ferry, where it was covered by batteries, and extending eastward towards the Neperan or Sawmill River; the French in a single line on the hills further east, reaching to the Bronx River. The beautiful valley of the Neperan intervened between the encampments. It was a lovely country for a summer encampment—breezy hills commanding wide prospects, umbrageous valleys watered by bright pastoral streams, the Bronx, the Spraine, and the Neperan, and abounding with never-failing springs. The French encampment made a gallant display along the Greenburgh hills. Some of the officers, young men of rank, to whom this was all a service of romance, took a pride in decorating their tents, and forming little gardens in their vicinity. "We have a charming position among rocks and under magnificent tulip trees;" writes one of them, the Count Dumas. General Washington was an object of their enthusiasm. He visited the tents they had so gayly embellished; for, with all his gravity, he was fond of the company of young men. They were apprised of his coming, and set out on their camp-tables plans of the battle of Trenton; of West Point, and other scenes connected with the war. The greatest harmony prevailed between the armies. The two commanders had their respective head-quarters in farm-houses, and occasionally, on festive occasions, long tables were spread in the adjacent barns, which were converted into banqueting halls. The young French officers gained the good graces of the country belles, though little acquainted with their language. Their encampment was particularly gay, and it was the boast of an old lady of the neighborhood many years after the war, that she had danced at head-quarters when a girl with the celebrated Marshal Berthier, at that time one of the aides-de-camp of the Count de Rochambeau.<sup>1</sup>

The two armies lay thus encamped for three or four weeks. In the mean time letters urged Washington's presence in Virginia. Richard Henry Lee advised that he should come with two or three thousand good troops, and be clothed with dictatorial powers. "There is nothing, I think, more certain," writes Lee, "than that your personal call would bring into immediate exertion the force and the resources of this State and the neighboring ones, which, directed as they would be, will effectually disappoint and baffle the deep-laid schemes of the enemy."

"I am fully persuaded, and upon good military principles,"

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<sup>1</sup> Bolton's Hist. of Westchester Co., vol. 1. 243.

writes Washington in reply, "that the measures I have adopted will give more effectual and speedy relief to the State of Virginia, than my marching thither. with dictatorial powers, at the head of every man I could draw from hence, without leaving the important posts on the North River quite defenceless, and these States open to devastation and ruin. My present plan of operation, which I have been preparing with all the zeal and activity in my power, will, I am morally certain, with proper support, produce one of two things, either the fall of New York, or a withdrawal of the troops from Virginia, excepting a garrison at Portsmouth, at which place I have no doubt of the enemy's intention of establishing a permanent post."

Within two or three days after this letter was written, Washington crossed the river at Dobbs' Ferry, accompanied by the Count de Rochambeau, General de Beville, and General Duportail, to reconnoitre the British posts on the north end of New York Island. They were escorted by one hundred and fifty of the New Jersey troops, and spent the day on the Jersey heights ascertaining the exact position of the enemy on the opposite shore. Their next movement was to reconnoitre the enemy's post at King's Bridge and on the east side of New York Island, and to cut off, if possible, such of Delancey's corps as should be found without the British lines. Five thousand troops, French and American, led by the Count de Chastellux and General Lincoln, were to protect this reconnoissance, and menace the enemy's posts. Every thing was prepared in secrecy. On the 21st of July, at eight o'clock in the evening, the troops began their march in separate columns; part down the Hudson River road, part down the Sawmill River Valley; part by the East Chester road. Scammel's light infantry advanced through the fields to waylay the roads, stop all communication, and prevent intelligence getting to the enemy. Sheldon's cavalry with the Connecticut troops were to scour Throg's Neck. Sheldon's infantry and Lauzun's lancers were to do the same with the refugee region of Morrisania.

The whole detachment arrived at King's Bridge about daylight, and formed on the height back of Fort Independence. The enemy's forts on New York Island did not appear to have the least intelligence of what was going on, nor to be aware that hostile troops were upon the heights opposite, until the latter displayed themselves in full array, their arms flashing in the morning sunshine, and their banners, American and French, unfolded to the breeze.

While the enemy was thus held in check, Washington and

De Rochambeau, accompanied by engineers and by their staffs, set out under the escort of a troop of dragoons to reconnoitre the enemy's position and works from every point of view. It was a wide reconnaissance, extending across the country outside of the British lines from the Hudson to the Sound. The whole was done slowly and scientifically, exact notes and diagrams being made of every thing that might be of importance in future operations. As the "cortege" moved slowly along, or paused to make observation, it was cannonaded from the distant works, or from the armed vessels stationed on the neighboring waters, but without injuring it or quickening its movements.

According to De Rochambeau's account, the two reconnoitring generals were at one time in an awkward and hazardous predicament. They had passed, he said, to an island separated by an arm of the sea from the enemy's post on Long Island, and the engineers were employed in making scientific observations, regardless of the firing of small vessels stationed in the Sound. During this time, the two generals, exhausted by fatigue and summer heat, slept under shelter of a hedge. De Rochambeau was the first to awake, and was startled at observing the state of the tide, which during their slumber had been rapidly rising. Awakening Washington and calling his attention to it, they hastened to the causeway by which they had crossed from the mainland. It was covered with water. Two small boats were brought, in which they embarked with the saddles and bridles of their horses. Two American dragoons then returned in the boats to the shore of the island, where the horses remained under care of their comrades. Two of the horses, which were good swimmers, were held by the bridle and guided across; the rest were driven into the water by the smack of the whip, and followed their leaders; the boats then brought over the rest of the party. De Rochambeau admired this manœuvre as a specimen of American tactics in the management of wild horses; but he thought it lucky that the enemy knew nothing of their embarrassment, which lasted nearly an hour, otherwise they might literally have been caught napping.

While the enemy's works had been thoroughly reconnoitred, light troops and lancers had performed their duty in scouring the neighborhood. The refugee posts which had desolated the country were broken up. Most of the refugees, Washington says, had fled and hid themselves in secret places; some got over by stealth to the adjacent islands, and to the enemy's shipping, and a few were caught. Having effected the purposes of their expedition, the two generals set off with their

troops, on the 23d, for their encampment, where they arrived about midnight.

The immediate effect of this threatening movement of Washington, appears in a letter of Sir Henry Clinton to Cornwallis, dated July 26, requesting him to order three regiments to New York from Carolina. "I shall probably want them as well as the troops you may be able to spare me from the Chesapeake for such offensive or defensive operations as may offer in this quarter,"<sup>1</sup>

And Washington writes to Lafayette a few days subsequently: "I think we have already effected one part of the plan of the campaign settled at Weathersfield, that is, giving a substantial relief to the Southern States, by obliging the enemy to recall a considerable part of their force from thence. Our views must now be turned towards endeavoring to expel them totally from those States, if we find ourselves incompetent to the siege of New York."

We will now give the reader a view of affairs in Virginia, and show how they were ultimately affected by these military manœuvres and demonstrations in the neighborhood of King's Bridge.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

**MOVEMENTS AND COUNTER-MOVEMENTS OF CORNWALLIS AND LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA — TARLETON AND HIS TROOPERS SCOUR THE COUNTRY — A DASH AT THE STATE LEGISLATURE — ATTEMPT TO SURPRISE THE GOVERNOR AT MONTICELLO — RETREAT OF JEFFERSON TO CARTER'S MOUNTAIN — STEUBEN OUTWITTED BY SIMCOE — LAFAYETTE JOINED BY WAYNE AND STEUBEN — ACTS ON THE AGGRESSIVE — DESPERATE MÊLÉE OF McPHERSON AND SIMCOE — CORNWALLIS PURSUED TO JAMESTOWN ISLAND — MAD ANTHONY IN A MORASS — HIS IMPETUOUS VALOR — ALERTNESS OF LAFAYETTE — WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN.**

The first object of Lord Cornwallis on the junction of his forces at Petersburg in May, was to strike a blow at Lafayette. The marquis was encamped on the north side of James River, between Wilton and Richmond, with about one thousand regulars, two thousand militia, and fifty dragoons. He was waiting

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence relative to operations in Virginia, p. 153.

for re-enforcements of militia, and for the arrival of General Wayne, with the Pennsylvania line. The latter had been ordered to the South by Washington, nearly three months previously; but unavoidably delayed. Joined by these, Lafayette would venture to receive a blow, "that being beaten, he might at least be beaten with decency, and Cornwallis pay something for his victory."<sup>1</sup>

His lordship hoped to draw him into an action before thus re-enforced, and with that view, marched on the 24th of May, from Petersburg to James River, which he crossed at Westover, about thirty miles below Richmond. Here he was joined on the 26th by a re-enforcement just arrived from New York, part of which he sent under General Leslie to strengthen the garrison at Portsmouth. He was relieved also from military companionship with the infamous Arnold, who obtained leave of absence to return to New York, where business of importance was said to demand his attention. While he was in command of the British army in Virginia, Lafayette had refused to hold any correspondence, or reciprocate any of the civilities of war with him; for which he was highly applauded by Washington.

Being now strongly re-enforced, Cornwallis moved to dislodge Lafayette from Richmond. The latter, conscious of the inferiority of his forces, decamped as soon as he heard his lordship had crossed James River. "I am resolved," said he, "on a war of skirmishes, without engaging too far, and above all, to be on my guard against that pumerous and excellent cavalry, which the militia dread, as if they were so many savage beasts." He now directed his march towards the upper country, inclining to the north, to favor a juncture with Wayne. Cornwallis followed him as far as the upper part of Hanover County, destroying public stores wherever found. He appears to have undervalued Lafayette, on account of his youth. "The boy cannot escape me," said he in a letter which was intercepted. The youth of the marquis, however, aided the celerity of his movements; and now that he had the responsibility of an independent command, he restrained his youthful fire, and love of enterprise. Independence had rendered him cautious. "I am afraid of myself," said he, "as much as of the enemy."<sup>2</sup>

Cornwallis soon found it impossible either to overtake Lafayette, or prevent his junction with Wayne; he turned his attention, therefore, to other objects.

Greene, in his passage through Virginia, had urged the im-

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Hamilton, May 23.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Colonel Alex. Hamilton, May 23, 1780.

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portance of removing horses out of the way of the enemy ; his caution had been neglected ; the consequences were now felt. The great number of fine horses in the stables of Virginia gentlemen, who are noted for their love of the noble animal, had enabled Cornwallis to mount many of his troops in first-rate style. These he employed in scouring the country, and destroying public stores. Tarleton and his legion, it is said, were mounted on race-horses. "Under this cloud of light troops," said Lafayette, "it is difficult to counteract any rapid movements they may choose to take !"

The State legislature had been removed for safety to Charlottesville, where it was assembled for the purpose of levying taxes, and drafting militia. Tarleton, with one hundred and eighty cavalry and seventy mounted infantry, was ordered by Cornwallis to make a dash there, break up the legislature, and carry off members. On his way thither, on the 4th of June, he captured and destroyed a convoy of arms and clothing destined for Greene's army in North Carolina. At another place he surprised several persons of note at the house of a Dr. Walker, but lingered so long breakfasting, that a person mounted on a fleet horse had time to reach Charlottesville before him, and spread the alarm. Tarleton crossed the Rivanna, which washes the hill on which Charlottesville is situated ; dispersed a small force collected on the bank, and galloped into the town thinking to capture the whole assembly. Seven alone fell into his hands ; the rest had made their escape. No better success attended a party of horse under Captain McLeod, detached to surprise the Governor (Thomas Jefferson), at his residence in Monticello, about three miles from Charlottesville, where several members of the legislature were his guests. The dragoons were espied winding up the mountain ; the guests dispersed ; the family was hurried off to the residence of Colonel Carter, six miles distant, while the governor himself made a rapid retreat on horseback to Carter's Mountain.

Having set fire to all the public stores at Charlottesville, Tarleton pushed for the point of Fork at the confluence of the Rivanna and Fluvanna ; to aid, if necessary, a detachment of yagers, infantry and hussars, sent under Colonel Simcoe to destroy a great quantity of military stores collected at that port. The Baron Steuben, who was stationed there with five hundred Virginia regulars and a few militia, and had heard of the march of Tarleton, had succeeded in transporting the greater part of the stores, as well as his troops, across the river, and as the water was deep and the boats were all on his side, he might

have felt himself secure. The unexpected appearance of Simcoe's infantry, however, designedly spread out on the opposite heights, deceived him into the idea that it was the van of the British army. In his alarm he made a night retreat of thirty miles, leaving the greater part of the stores scattered along the river bank; which were destroyed the next morning by a small detachment of the enemy sent across in canoes.

On the 10th of June, Lafayette was at length gladdened by the arrival of Wayne with about nine hundred of the Pennsylvania line. Thus re-enforced, he changed his whole plan, and ventured on the aggressive. Cornwallis had gotten between him and a large deposit of military stores at Albemarle Old Court-house.

The marquis, by a rapid march at night, through a road long disused, threw himself between the British army and the stores, and, being joined by a numerous body of mountain militia, took a strong position to dispute the advance of the enemy.

Cornwallis did not think it advisable to pursue this enterprise, especially as he heard Lafayette would soon be joined by forces under Baron Steuben. Yielding easy credence, therefore, to a report that the stores had been removed from Albemarle Court-house, he turned his face towards the lower part of Virginia, and made a retrograde march, first to Richmond, and afterwards to Williamsburg.

Lafayette, being joined by Steuben and his forces, had about four thousand men under him, one-half of whom were regulars. He now followed the British army at the distance of eighteen or twenty miles, throwing forward his light troops to harass their rear, which was covered by Tarleton and Simcoe with their cavalry and infantry.

Cornwallis arrived at Williamsburg on the 25th, and sent out Simcoe with his rangers and a company of yagers to destroy some boats and stores on the Chickahominy River, and to sweep off the cattle of the neighborhood. Lafayette heard of the ravage, and detached Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, of the Pennsylvania line, with a corps of light troops and a body of horse under Major McPherson, to intercept the marauders. As the infantry could not push on fast enough for the emergency, McPherson took up fifty of them behind fifty of his dragoons, and dashed on. He overtook a company of Simcoe's rangers under Captain Shank, about six miles from Williamsburg, foraging at a farm; a sharp encounter took place; McPherson at the outset was unhorsed and severely hurt. The action continued. Simcoe with his infantry, who had been in the



advance conveying a drove of cattle, now engaged in the fight. Butler's riflemen began to arrive, and supported the dragoons. It was a desperate *mêlée*; much execution was done on both sides. Neither knew the strength of the force they were contending with; but supposed it the advance guard of the opposite army. An alarm-gun was fired by the British on a neighboring hill. It was answered by alarm-guns at Williamsburg. The Americans supposed the whole British force coming out to assail them, and began to retire. Simcoe, imagining Lafayette to be at hand, likewise drew off, and pursued his march to Williamsburg. Both parties fought well; both had been severely handled; both claimed a victory, though neither gained one. The loss in killed and wounded on both sides was severe for the number engaged; but the statements vary, and were never reconciled. It is certain the result gave great satisfaction to the Americans, and inspired them with redoubled ardor.

An express was received by Cornwallis at Williamsburg which obliged him to change his plans. The movements of Washington in the neighborhood of New York, menacing an attack, had produced the desired effect. Sir Henry Clinton, alarmed for the safety of the place, had written to Cornwallis requiring a part of his troops for its protection. His lordship prepared to comply with this requisition, but as it would leave him too weak to continue at Williamsburg, he set out on the 4th of July for Portsmouth.

Lafayette followed him on the ensuing day, and took post within nine miles of his camp; intending, when the main body of the enemy should have crossed the ford to the island of Jamestown, to fall upon the rear-guard. Cornwallis suspected his design, and prepared to take advantage of it. The wheel carriages, bat horses and baggage, were passed over to the island under the escort of the Queen's rangers; making a great display, as if the main body had crossed; his lordship, however, with the greater part of his forces, remained on the mainland, his right covered by ponds, the centre and left by morasses over which a few narrow causeways of logs connected his position with the country, and James Island lay in the rear. His camp was concealed by a skirt of woods, and covered by an outpost.

In the morning of the 6th, as the Americans were advancing, a negro and a dragoon, employed by Tarleton, threw themselves in their way, pretending to be deserters, and informed them that the body of the king's troops had passed James River in

the night, leaving nothing behind but the rear-guard, composed of the British legion and a detachment of infantry. Persuaded of the fact, Lafayette with his troops crossed the morass on the left of the enemy by a narrow causeway of logs, and halted beyond about sunset. Wayne was detached with a body of riflemen, dragoons and Continental infantry, to make the attack, while the marquis with nine hundred Continentals and some militia stood ready to support him.

Wayne easily routed a patrol of cavalry and drove in the pickets, who had been ordered to give way readily. The outpost which covered the camp defended itself more obstinately though exceedingly galled by the riflemen. Wayne pushed forward with the Pennsylvania line, eight hundred strong, and three field-pieces, to attack it; at the first discharge of a cannon more than two thousand of the enemy emerged from their concealment, and he found too late that the whole British line was in battle array before him. To retreat was more dangerous than to go on. So thinking, with that impetuous valor which had gained him the name of Mad Anthony, he ordered a charge to be sounded, and threw himself horse and foot with shouts upon the enemy. It was a sanguinary conflict and a desperate one, for the enemy were outflanking him right and left. Fortunately, the heaviness of the fire had awakened the suspicions of Lafayette:—it was too strong for the outpost of a rear-guard. Spurring to a point of land which commanded a view of the British camp, he discovered the actual force of the enemy, and the peril of Wayne. Galloping back, he sent word to Wayne to fall back to General Muhlenburg's brigade, which had just arrived, and was forming within half a mile of the scene of conflict. Wayne did so in good order, leaving behind him his three cannon, the horses which drew them having been killed.

The whole army then retired across the morass. The enemy's cavalry would have pursued them, but Cornwallis forbade it. The night was falling. The hardihood of Wayne's attack, and his sudden retreat, it is said, deceived and perplexed his lordship. He thought the Americans more strong than they really were, and the retreat a mere feint to draw him into an ambuscade. That retreat, if followed close, might have been converted into a disastrous flight.

The loss of the Americans in this brief but severe conflict is stated by Lafayette to have been one hundred and eighteen killed, wounded and prisoners, including ten officers. The British loss was said to be five officers wounded, and seventy-

five privates killed and wounded. "Our field officers," said Wayne, "were generally dismounted by having their horses either killed or wounded under them. I will not condole with the marquis for the loss of two of his, as he was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance. His natural bravery rendered him deaf to admonition."

Lafayette retreated to Green Springs, where he rallied and reposed his troops. Cornwallis crossed over to Jamestown Island after dark, and three days afterwards, passing James River with his main force, proceeded to Portsmouth. His object was, in conformity to his instructions from the ministry, to establish there or elsewhere on the Chesapeake, a permanent post, to serve as a central point for naval and military operations.

In his letters to Washington giving an account of these events, Lafayette says: "I am anxious to know your opinion of the Virginia campaign. The subjugation of this State was incontestably the principal object of the ministry. I think your diversion has been of more use than any of my manœuvres; but the latter have been above all directed by political views. As long as his lordship desired an action, not a musket has been fired; the moment he would avoid a combat, we began a war of skirmishes; but I had always care not to compromise the army. The naval superiority of the enemy, his superiority in cavalry, in regular troops, and his thousand other advantages, make me consider myself lucky to have come off safe and sound. I had my eye fixed on negotiations in Europe, and I made it my aim to give his lordship the disgrace of a retreat."<sup>1</sup>

We will now turn to resume the course of General Greene's campaigning in the Carolinas.

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<sup>1</sup> *Memoires de Lafayette*, t. i. p. 445.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

GREENE'S RETROGRADE OPERATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA — APPEARS BEFORE CAMDEN — AFFAIR AT HOBKIRK'S HILL — RAWDON ABANDONS CAMDEN — RAPID SUCCESSES OF THE AMERICANS — GREENE'S ATTACK ON THE FORTRESS OF NINETY-SIX — OPERATIONS AGAINST LORD RAWDON — GREENE ON THE HIGH HILLS OF SANTEE — SUMTER SCOURS THE LOWER COUNTRY — DASH OF COLONEL WADE HAMPTON AT THE GATES OF CHARLESTON — EXPLOITS OF LEE AND HAMPTON — OF CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG AT QUIMBY BRIDGE — ACTION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD — END OF THE CAMPAIGN.

It will be recollected that Greene, on the 5th of April, set out from the Deep River on a retrograde march to carry the war again into South Carolina, beginning by an attack on Lord Rawdon's post at Camden. Sumter and Marion had been keeping alive the revolutionary fire in that State; the former on the north-east frontier, the latter in his favorite fighting ground between the Pedee and Santee Rivers. On the reappearance of Greene, they stood ready to aid with heart and hand.

On his way to Camden, Greene detached Lee to join Marion with his legion, and make an attack upon Fort Watson by way of diversion. For himself, he appeared before Camden, but finding it too strong and too well garrisoned, fell back about two miles, and took post at Hobkirk's Hill, hoping to draw his lordship out. He succeeded but too well. His lordship attacked him on the 25th of April, coming upon him partly by surprise. There was a hard-fought battle, but through some false move among part of his troops, Greene was obliged to retreat. His lordship did not pursue, but shut himself up in Camden, waiting to be rejoined by part of his garrison which was absent.

Greene posted himself near Camden Ferry on the Wateree, to intercept these re-enforcements. Lee and Marion, who had succeeded in capturing Fort Watson, also took a position on the high hills of Santee for the same purpose. Their efforts were unavailing. Lord Rawdon was rejoined by the other part of his troops. His superior force now threatened to give him the mastery. Greene felt the hazardous nature of his situation. His troops were fatigued by their long marchings; he was dis-

appointed of promised aid and re-enforcements from Virginia; still he was undismayed, and prepared for another of his long and stubborn retreats. "We must always operate," said he, "on the maxim that your enemy will do what he ought to do. Lord Rawdon will push us back to the mountains, but we will dispute every inch of ground in the best manner we can." Such were his words to General Davie on the evening of the 9th of May, as he sat in his tent with a map before him studying the roads and fastnesses of the country. An express was to set off for Philadelphia the next morning, and he requested General Davie, who was of that city, to write to the members of Congress, with whom he was acquainted, painting in the strongest colors their situation and gloomy prospects.

The very next morning there was a joyful reverse. Greene sent for General Davie. "Rawdon," cried he, exultingly, "is preparing to evacuate Camden; that place was the key of the enemy's line of posts, they will now all fall or be evacuated; all will now go well. Burn your letters. I shall march immediately to the Congaree."

His lordship had heard of the march of Cornwallis into Virginia, and that all hope of aid from him was at an end. His garrison was out of provisions. All supplies were cut off by the Americans; he had no choice but to evacuate. He left Camden in flames. Immense quantities of stores and baggage were consumed, together with the court-house, the gaol, and many private houses.

Rapid successes now attended the American arms. Fort Mott, the middle post between Camden and Ninety-Six, was taken by Marion and Lee. Lee next captured Granby, and marched to aid Pickens in the siege of Augusta; while Greene, having acquired a supply of arms, ammunition, and provisions, from the captured forts, sat down before the fortress of Ninety-Six, on the 22d of May. It was the great mart and stronghold of the royalists, and was principally garrisoned by royalists from New Jersey and New York, commanded by Colonel Cruger, a native of New York. The siege lasted for nearly a month. The place was valiantly defended. Lee arrived with his legion, having failed before Augusta, and invested a stockaded fort which formed part of the works.

Word was brought that Lord Rawdon was pressing forward with re-enforcements, and but a few miles distant on the Saluda. Greene endeavored to get up Sumter, Marion and Pickens to his assistance, but they were too far on the right of Lord Rawdon to form a junction. The troops were eager to

storm the works before his lordship should arrive. A partial assault was made on the 18th of June. It was a bloody contest. The stockaded fort was taken, but the troops were repulsed from the main works.

Greene retreated across the Saluda, and halted at Bush River, at twenty miles distance, to observe the motion of the enemy. In a letter thence to Washington, he writes: "My fears are principally from the enemy's superior cavalry. To the northward cavalry is nothing, from the numerous fences; but to the southward, a disorder, by superior cavalry, may be improved into a defeat, and a defeat into a rout. Virginia and North Carolina could not be brought to consider cavalry of such great importance as they are to the security of the army and the safety of a country."

Lord Rawdon entered Ninety-Six on the 21st, but sallied forth again on the 24th, taking with him all the troops capable of fatigue, two thousand in number, without wheel carriage of any kind, or even knapsacks, hoping by a rapid move to overtake Greene. Want of provisions soon obliged him to give up the pursuit, and return to Ninety-Six. Leaving about one half of his force there, under Colonel Cruger, he sallied a second time from Ninety-Six, at the head of eleven hundred infantry, with cavalry, artillery, and field-pieces, marching by the south side of the Saluda for the Congaree.

He was now pursued in his turn by Greene and Lee. In this march more than fifty of his lordship's soldiers fell dead from heat, fatigue and privation. At Orangeburg, where he arrived on the 8th of July, his lordship was joined by a large detachment under Colonel Stuart.

Greene had followed him closely, and having collected all his detachments, and being joined by Sumter, appeared within four miles of Orangeburg, on the 10th of July, and offered battle. The offer was not accepted, and the position of Lord Rawdon was too strong to be attacked. Greene remained there two or three days; when, learning that Colonel Cruger was advancing with the residue of the forces from Ninety-Six, which would again give his lordship a superiority of force, he moved off with his infantry on the night of the 13th of July, crossed the Saluda, and posted himself on the east side of the Wateree at the high hills of Santee. In this salubrious and delightful region, where the air was pure and breezy, and the water delicate, he allowed his weary soldiers to repose and refresh themselves, awaiting the arrival of some Continental troops and militia from North Carolina, when he intended to resume

his enterprise of driving the enemy from the interior of the country.

At the time when he moved from the neighborhood of Orangeburg (July 13), he detached Sumter with about a thousand light troops to scour the lower country, and attack the British posts in the vicinity of Charleston, now left uncovered by the concentration of their forces at Orangeburg. Under Sumter acted Marion, Lee, the Hamptons, and other enterprising partisans. They were to act separately in breaking up the minor posts at and about Dorchester, but to unite at Monk's Corner, where Lieutenant-Colonel Coates was stationed with the ninth regiment. This post carried, they were to reunite with Greene's army on the high hills of Santee.

Scarce was Sumter on his march, when he received a letter from Greene, dated July 14, stating that Cruger had formed a junction with Lord Rawdon the preceding night; no time, therefore, was to be lost. "Push your operations night and day: station a party to watch the enemy's motions at Orangeburg. Keep Colonel Lee and General Marion advised of all matters from above, and tell Colonel Lee to thunder even at the gates of Charleston."

Conformably to these orders, Colonel Henry Hampton with a party was posted to keep an eye on Orangeburg. Lee with his legion, accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Wade Hampton, and a detachment of cavalry, was sent to carry Dorchester, and then press forward to the gates of Charleston; while Sumter, with the main body, took up his line of march along the road on the south side of the Congaree, towards Monk's Corner.

As Lee approached Dorchester, Colonel Wade Hampton, with his cavalry, passed to the east of that place, to a bridge on Goose Creek, to cut off all communication between the garrison and Monk's Corner. His sudden appearance gave the alarm, the garrison abandoned its post, and when Lee arrived there he found it deserted. He proceeded to secure a number of horses and wagons, and some fixed ammunition, which the garrison had left behind, and to send them off to Hampton. Hampton, kept in suspense by this delay, lost patience. He feared that the alarm would spread through the country, and the dash into the vicinity of Charleston be prevented—or, perhaps, that Lee might intend to make it by himself. Abandoning the bridge at Goose Creek, therefore, he set off with his cavalry, clattered down to the neighborhood of the lines, and threw the city into confusion. The bells rang, alarm-guns were

fired, the citizens turned out under arms. Hampton captured a patrol of dragoons and a guard at the Quarter House; completed his bravado by parading his cavalry in sight of the sentinels on the advanced works, and then retired, carrying off fifty prisoners, several of them officers.

Lee arrived in the neighborhood on the following day, but too late to win any laurels. Hampton had been beforehand with him, made the dash, and "thundered at the gate." Both now hastened to rejoin Sumter on the evening of the 16th, who was only waiting to collect his detachments, before he made an attack on Colonel Coates at Monk's Corner. The assault was to be made on the following morning. During the night Coates decamped in silence; the first signal of his departure, was the bursting of flames through the roof of a brick church, which he had used as a magazine, and which contained stores that could not be carried away. A pursuit was commenced; Lee with his legion, and Hampton with the State cavalry, took the lead. Sumter followed with the infantry. The rear-guard of the British, about one hundred strong, was overtaken with the baggage, at the distance of eighteen miles. They were new troops, recently arrived from Ireland, and had not seen service. On being charged by the cavalry sword in hand, they threw down their arms without firing a shot, and cried for quarter, which was granted. While Lee was securing them, Captain Armstrong with the first section of cavalry pushed on in pursuit of Coates and the main body. That officer had crossed a wooden bridge over Quimby Creek, loosened the planks, and was only waiting to be rejoined by his rear-guard, to throw them off, and cut off all pursuit. His troops were partly on a causeway beyond the bridge, partly crowded in a lane. He had heard no alarm-guns, and knew nothing of an enemy being at hand, until he saw Armstrong spurring up with his section. Coates gave orders for his troops to halt, form, and march up; a howitzer was brought to bear upon the bridge, and a fatigue party rushed forward to throw off the planks. Armstrong saw the danger, dashed across the bridge, with his section, drove off the artillerymen, and captured the howitzer before it could be discharged. The fatigue men, who had been at work on the bridge, snatched up their guns, gave a volley and fled. Two dragoons fell dead by the howitzer; others were severely wounded. Armstrong's party, in crossing the bridge, had displaced some of the planks, and formed a chasm. Lieutenant Carrington with the second section of dragoons leaped over it; the chasm being thus enlarged, the horses of the third section



refused. A pell-mell fight took place between the handful of dragoons who had crossed, and some of the enemy. Armstrong and Carrington were engaged hand to hand with Colonel Coates and his officers, who defended themselves from behind a wagon. The troops were thronging to their aid from lane and causeway. Armstrong, seeing the foe too strong in front, and no re-enforcement coming on in rear, wheeled off with some of his men to the left, galloped into the woods, and pushed up along the stream to ford it, and seek the main body.

During the *mêlée*, Lee had came up and endeavored with the dragoons of the third section to replace the planks of the bridge. Their efforts were vain, the water was deep, the mud deeper; there was no foothold, nor was there any firm spot where to swim the horses across.

While they were thus occupied, Colonel Coates, with his men, opened a fire upon them from the other end of the bridge; having no fire-arms to reply with, they were obliged to retire. The remainder of the planks were then thrown off from the bridge, after which Colonel Coates took post on an adjacent plantation, made the dwelling-house, which stood on a rising ground, his citadel, planted the howitzer before it, and distributed part of his men in outhouses and within fences and garden pickets, which sheltered them from the attack of cavalry. Here he awaited the arrival of Sumter with the main body, determined to make a desperate defence.

It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon, that Sumter with his forces appeared upon the ground, having had to make a considerable circuit on account of the destruction of the bridge.

By four o'clock the attack commenced. Sumter, with part of the troops, advanced in front under cover of a line of negro huts, which he wished to secure. Marion, with his brigade, much reduced in number, approached on the right of the enemy, where there was no shelter but fences; the cavalry, not being able to act, remained at a distance as a reserve, and, if necessary, to cover a retreat.

Sumter's brigade soon got possession of the huts, where they used their rifles with sure effect. Marion and his men rushed up through a galling fire to the fences on the right. The enemy retired within the house and garden, and kept up a sharp fire from doors and windows and picketed fence. Unfortunately, the Americans had neglected to bring on their artillery; their rifles and muskets were not sufficient to force the enemy from his stronghold. Having repaired the bridge, they sent off for the artillery and a supply of powder, which

accompanied it. The evening was at hand; their ammunition was exhausted, and they retired in good order, intending to renew the combat with artillery in the morning. Leaving the cavalry to watch and control the movements of the enemy, they drew off across Quimby Bridge, and encamped at the distance of three miles.

Here, when they came to compare notes, it was found that the loss in killed and wounded had chiefly fallen on Marion's corps. His men, from their exposed situation, had borne the brunt of the battle; while Sumter's had suffered but little, being mostly sheltered in the huts. Jealousy and distrust were awakened, and discord reigned in the camp. Partisan and volunteer troops readily fall asunder under such circumstances. Many moved off in the night. Lee, accustomed to act independently, and unwilling, perhaps, to acknowledge Sumter as his superior officer, took up his line of march for head-quarters without consulting him. Sumter still had force enough, now that he was joined by the artillery, to have held the enemy in a state of siege; but he was short of ammunition, only twenty miles from Charleston, at a place accessible by tide water, and he apprehended the approach of Lord Rawdon, who, it was said, was moving down from Orangeburg. He therefore retired across the Santee, and rejoined Greene at his encampment.

So ended this foray, which fell far short of the expectations formed from the spirit and activity of the leaders and their men. Various errors have been pointed out in their operations, but concerted schemes are rarely carried out in all their parts by partisan troops. One of the best effects of the incursion, was the drawing down Lord Rawdon from Orangeburg, with five hundred of his troops. He returned no more to the upper country, but sailed not long after from Charleston for Europe.

Colonel Stuart, who was left in command at Orangeburg, moved forward from that place, and encamped on the south side of the Congaree River, near its junction with the Wateree, and within sixteen miles of Greene's position on the high hills of Santee. The two armies lay in sight of each other's fires, but two large rivers intervened, to secure each party from sudden attack. Both armies, however, needed repose, and military operations were suspended, as if by mutual consent, during the sultry summer heat.

The campaign had been a severe and trying one, and checked with vicissitudes; but Greene had succeeded in regaining the greater part of Georgia and the two Carolinas, and, as he

said, only wanted a little assistance from the North to complete their recovery. He was soon rejoiced by a letter from Washington, informing him that a detachment from the army of Lafayette might be expected to bring him the required assistance; but he was made still more happy by the following cordial passage in the letter: "It is with the warmest pleasure I express my full approbation of the various movements and operations which your military conduct has lately exhibited, while I confess to you that I am unable to conceive what more could have been done under your circumstances, than has been displayed by your little, persevering, and determined army."

## CHAPTER XLV.

WASHINGTON DISAPPOINTED AS TO RE-ENFORCEMENTS — FRENCH ARMAMENT DESTINED FOR THE CHESAPEAKE — ATTEMPTS ON NEW YORK POSTPONED — MARCH OF THE ARMIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE — STRATAGEMS TO DECEIVE THE ENEMY — ARNOLD RAVAGES NEW LONDON — WASHINGTON AT PHILADELPHIA — MARCH OF THE TWO ARMIES THROUGH THE CITY — CORNWALLIS AT YORKTOWN — PREPARATIONS TO PROCEED AGAINST HIM — VISIT TO MOUNT VERNON.

AFTER the grand reconnoissance of the posts on New York Island, related in a former page, the confederate armies remained encamped about Dobbs' Ferry and the Greenburg hills, awaiting an augmentation of force for their meditated attack. To Washington's great disappointment, his army was but tardily and scantily recruited, while the garrison of New York was augmented by the arrival of three thousand Hessian troops from Europe. In this predicament he despatched a circular letter to the governments of the Eastern States, representing his delicate and embarrassed situation. "Unable to advance with prudence beyond my present position," writes he, "while, perhaps, in the general opinion, my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York, my conduct must appear, if not blamable, highly mysterious at least. Our allies, who were made to expect a very considerable augmentation of force by this time, instead of seeing a prospect of advancing, must conjecture, upon good grounds, that the campaign will waste fruitlessly away. It will be no small degree of triumph to our enemies, and will have a pernicious influence upon our

friends in Europe, should they find such a failure of resource, or such a want of energy to draw it out, that our boasted and extensive preparations end only in idle parade. . . . "The fulfilment of my engagements must depend upon the degree of vigor with which the executives of the several States exercise the powers with which they have been vested, and enforce the laws lately passed for filling up and supplying the army. In full confidence that the means which have been voted will be obtained, I shall continue my operations."

Until we study Washington's full, perspicuous letters, we know little of the difficulties he had to struggle with in conducting his campaigns; how often the sounding resolves of legislative bodies disappointed him; how often he had to maintain a bold front when his country failed to back him; how often, as in the siege of Boston, he had to carry on the war without powder!

In a few days came letters from Lafayette, dated 26th and 30th of July, speaking of the embarkation of the greatest part of Cornwallis's army at Portsmouth. "There are in Hampton Roads thirty transport ships full of troops, most of them red-coats, and eight or ten brigs with cavalry on board." He supposed their destination to be New York, yet, though wind and weather were favorable, they did not sail. "Should a French fleet now come into Hampton Roads," adds the sanguine marquis, "the British army would, I think, be ours."

At this juncture arrived the French frigate *Concorde* at Newport, bringing despatches from Admiral the Count de Grasse. He was to leave St. Domingo on the 3d of August, with between twenty-five and thirty ships of the line, and a considerable body of land forces, and to steer immediately for the Chesapeake.

This changed the face of affairs, and called for a change in the game. All attempt upon New York was postponed; the whole of the French army, and as large a part of the Americans as could be spared, were to move to Virginia, and co-operate with the Count de Grasse for the redemption of the Southern States. Washington apprised the count by letter of this intention. He wrote also to Lafayette on the 15th of August: "By the time this reaches you, the Count de Grasse will either be in the Chesapeake, or may be looked for every moment. Under these circumstances, whether the enemy remain in full force, or whether they have only a detachment left, you will immediately take such a position as will best enable you to prevent their sudden retreat through North Carolina, which I presume

they will attempt the instant they perceive so formidable an armament."

Should General Wayne, with the troops destined for South Carolina, still remain in the neighborhood of James River, and the enemy have made no detachment to the southward, the Marquis was to detain these troops until he heard again from Washington, and was to inform General Greene of the cause of their detention.

"You shall hear further from me," concludes the letter, "as soon as I have concerted plans and formed dispositions for sending a re-enforcement from hence. In the mean time, I have only to recommend a continuance of that prudence and good conduct which you have manifested through the whole of your campaign. You will be particularly careful to conceal the expected arrival of the count; because, if the enemy are not apprised of it, they will stay on board their transports in the bay, which will be the luckiest circumstance in the world."

Washington's "soul was now in arms." At length, after being baffled and disappointed so often by the incompetency of his means, and above all, thwarted by the enemy's naval potency, he had the possibility of coping with them both on land and sea. The contemplated expedition was likely to consummate his plans, and wind up the fortunes of the war, and he determined to lead it in person. He would take with him something more than two thousand of the American army; the rest, chiefly Northern troops, were to remain with General Heath, who was to hold command of West Point, and the other posts of the Hudson.

Perfect secrecy was maintained as to this change of plan. Preparations were still carried on, as if for an attack upon New York. An extensive encampment was marked out in the Jerseys, and ovens erected, and fuel provided for the baking of bread; as if a part of the besieging force was to be stationed there, thence to make a descent upon the enemy's garrison on Staten Island, in aid of the operations against the city. The American troops, themselves, were kept in ignorance of their destination. General Washington, observes one of the shrewdest of them, matures his great plans and designs under an impenetrable veil of secrecy, and while we repose the fullest confidence in our chief, our opinions (as to his intentions) must be founded only on doubtful conjecture.<sup>1</sup>

Previous to his decampment, Washington sent forward a

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<sup>1</sup> See Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 322.

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party of pioneers to clear the roads towards King's Bridge, as if the posts recently reconnoitred were about to be attempted. On the 19th of August, his troops were paraded with their faces in that direction. When all were ready, however, they were ordered to face about, and were marched up along the Hudson River towards King's Ferry.

De Rochambeau, in like manner, broke up his encampment, and took the road by White Plains, North Castle, Pine's Bridge, and Crompond, towards the same point. All Westchester County was again alive with the tramp of troops, the gleam of arms, and the lumbering of artillery and baggage wagons along its roads.

On the 20th, Washington arrived at King's Ferry, and his troops began to cross the Hudson with their baggage, stores, and cannon, and encamp at Haverstraw. He himself crossed in the evening, and took up his quarters at Colonel Hay's, at the White House. Thence he wrote confidentially to Lafayette, on the 21st, now first apprising him of his being on the march with the expedition, and repeating his injunctions that the land and naval forces, already at the scene of action, should so combine their operations, that the English, on the arrival of the French fleet, might not be able to escape. He wrote also to the Count de Grasse (presuming that the letter would find him in the Chesapeake), urging him to send up all his frigates and transports to the Head of Elk, by the 8th of September, for the transportation of the combined army, which would be there by that time. He informed him also, that the Count de Barras had resolved to join him in the Chesapeake with his squadron. One is reminded of the tissue of movements planned from a distance, which ended in the capture of Burgoyne.

On the 22d, the French troops arrived by their circuitous route, and began to cross to Stony Point with their artillery, baggage, and stores. The operation occupied between two and three days; during which time Washington took the Count de Rochambeau on a visit to West Point, to show him the citadel of the Highlands, an object of intense interest, in consequence of having been the scene of Arnold's treason.

The two armies having safely crossed the Hudson, commenced, on the 25th, their several lines of march towards the Jerseys; the Americans for Springfield on the Rahway, the French for Whippany towards Trenton. Both armies were still kept in the dark, as to the ultimate object of their movement. An intelligent observer, already quoted, who accom-

panied the army, writes: "Our situation reminds me of some theatrical exhibition, where the interest and expectations of the spectators are continually increasing, and where curiosity is wrought to the highest point. Our destination has been for some time matter of perplexing doubt and uncertainty; bets have run high on one side, that we were to occupy the ground marked out on the Jersey shore, to aid in the siege of New York; and on the other, that we are stealing a march on the enemy, and are actually destined to Virginia, in pursuit of the army under Cornwallis. . . . A number of bateaux mounted on carriages have followed in our train; supposed for the purpose of conveying the troops over to Staten Island."<sup>1</sup>

The mystery was at length solved. "We have now passed all the enemy's posts," continues the foregoing writer, "and are pursuing our route, with increased rapidity, towards Philadelphia. Wagons have been prepared to carry the soldiers' packs that they may press forward with greater facility. Our destination can no longer be a secret. Cornwallis is unquestionably the object of our present expedition. . . . His Excellency, General Washington, having succeeded in a masterly piece of *generalship*, has now the satisfaction of leaving his adversary to ruminate on his own mortifying situation, and to anticipate the perilous fate which awaits his friend, Lord Cornwallis, in a different quarter."<sup>2</sup>

Washington had in fact reached the Delaware with his troops, before Sir Henry Clinton was aware of their destination. It was too late to oppose their march, even had his forces been adequate. As a kind of counterplot, therefore, and in the hope of distracting the attention of the American commander, and drawing off a part of his troops, he hurried off an expedition to the eastward, to insult the State of Connecticut, and attack her seaport of New London.

The command of this expedition, which was to be one of ravage and destruction, was given to Arnold, as if it was necessary to complete the measure of his infamy, that he should carry fire and sword into his native State, and desecrate the very cradle of his infancy.

On the 6th of September he appeared off the harbor of New

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<sup>1</sup> Thacher's Military Journal, p. 323.

<sup>2</sup> Washington several years afterwards, speaking of this important march in a letter to Noah Webster, writes: "That much trouble was taken, and finesse used, to misguide and bewilder Sir Henry Clinton in regard to the real object, by fictitious communications, as well as by making a deceptive provision of ovens, forage and boats in his neighborhood, is certain. Nor were less pains taken to deceive our own army, for I had always conceived where the imposition does not completely take place at home, it would never sufficiently succeed abroad." Sparks, ix, 404.

London with a fleet of ships and transports and a force of two thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry; partly British troops, but a great part made up of American royalists and refugees, and Hessian yagers.

New London stands on the west bank of the river Thames. The approach to it was defended by two forts on opposite sides of the river, and about a mile below the town; Fort Trumbull on the west and Fort Griswold on the east side, on a height called Groton Hill. The troops landed in two divisions of about eight hundred men each; one under Lieutenant-Colonel Eyre on the east side, the other under Arnold on the west, on the same side with New London, and about three miles below it. Arnold met with but little opposition. The few militia which manned an advance battery and Fort Trumbull, abandoned their posts, and crossed the river to Fort Griswold. He pushed on and took possession of the town.

Colonel Eyre had a harder task. The militia, about one hundred and fifty-seven strong, had collected in Fort Griswold, hastily and imperfectly armed it is true, some of them merely with spears; but they were brave men, and had a brave commander, Colonel William Ledyard, brother of the celebrated traveller. The fort was square and regularly built. Arnold, unaware of its strength, had ordered Colonel Eyre to take it by a coup-de-main. He discovered his mistake, and sent counter orders, but too late.

Colonel Eyre forced the pickets; made his way into the fosse, and attacked the fort on three sides; it was bravely defended; the enemy were repeatedly repulsed; they returned to the assault, scrambled up on each other's shoulders, effected a lodgment on the fraise, and made their way with fixed bayonets through the embrasure. Colonel Eyre received a mortal wound near the works; Major Montgomery took his place; a negro thrust him through with a spear as he mounted the parapet; Major Bromfield succeeded to the command, and carried the fort at the point of the bayonet. In fact, after the enemy were within the walls, fighting was at an end and the slaughter commenced. Colonel Ledyard had ordered his men to lay down their arms; but the enemy exasperated by the resistance they had experienced, and by the death of their officers, continued the deadly work of the musket and the bayonet. Colonel Ledyard, it is said, was thrust through with his own sword after yielding it up to Major Bromfield. Seventy of the garrison were slain, and thirty-five desperately wounded; and most of them after the fort had been taken. The massacre was



chiefly perpetrated by the tories, refugees and Hessians. Major Bromfield himself was a New Jersey loyalist. The rancor of such men against their patriot countrymen was always deadly. The loss of the enemy was two officers and forty-six soldiers killed, and eight officers and one hundred and thirty-five soldiers wounded.

Arnold in the mean time, had carried on the work of destruction at New London. Some of the American shipping had effected their escape up the river, but a number were burnt. Fire, too, was set to the public stores; it communicated to the dwelling-houses, and, in a little while, the whole place was wrapped in flames. The destruction was immense, not only of public but private property; many families once living in affluence were ruined and rendered homeless.

Having completed his ravage, Arnold retreated to his boats, leaving the town still burning. Alarm-guns had roused the country; the traitor was pursued by the exasperated yeomanry; he escaped their well-merited vengeance, but several of his men were killed and wounded.

So ended his career of infamy in his native land; a land which had once delighted to honor him, but in which his name was never thenceforth to be pronounced without a malediction.

The expedition, while it added one more hateful and disgraceful incident to this unnatural war, failed of its main object. It had not diverted Washington from the grand object on which he had fixed his mind. On the 30th of August, he, with his suite, had arrived at Philadelphia about noon, and alighted at the city tavern amidst enthusiastic crowds, who welcomed him with acclamations, but wondered at the object of this visit. During his sojourn in the city he was hospitably entertained at the house of Mr. Morris, the patriotic financier. The greatest difficulty with which he had to contend in his present enterprise, was the want of funds, part of the troops not having received any pay for a long time, and having occasionally given evidence of great discontent. The service upon which they were going was disagreeable to the Northern regiments, and the *douceur* of a little hard money would have an effect, Washington thought, to put them into a proper temper. In this emergency he was accommodated by the Count de Rochambeau, with a loan of twenty thousand hard dollars, which Mr. Robert Morris engaged to repay by the 1st of October. This pecuniary pressure was relieved by the arrival in Boston, on the 25th of August, of Colonel John Laurens from the mission to France, bringing with him two and a half mil-

lions of livres in cash, being part of a subsidy of six millions of livres granted by the French king.

On the 2d of September the American troops passed through Philadelphia. Their line of march, including appendages and attendants, extended nearly two miles. The general officers and their staffs were well dressed and well mounted, and followed by servants and baggage. In the rear of every brigade were several field-pieces with ammunition wagons. The soldiers kept step to the sound of the drum and fife. In the rear followed a great number of wagons laden with tents, provisions and baggage, besides a few soldiers' wives and children. The weather was warm and dry. The troops as they marched raised a cloud of dust "like a smothering snow-storm," which almost blinded them. The begriming effect was especially mortifying to the campaigner whom we quote, "as ladies were viewing them from the windows of every house as they passed." Notwithstanding the dusty and somewhat ragged plight of the soldiery, however, they were cheered with enthusiasm by the populace, which hailed them as the war-worn defenders of the country.

The French troops entered on the following day, but in different style. Halting within a mile of the city, they arranged their arms and accoutrements; brushed the dust off their gay white uniforms faced with green, and then marched in with buoyant step and brilliant array to the swelling music of a military band. The streets were again thronged by the shouting populace. The windows were crowded with ladies; among whom probably were some of the beauties who had crowned the British knights in the chivalrous mime of the *Mischianza*, now ready to bestow smiles and wreaths on their Gallic rivals.

At Philadelphia Washington received despatches from Lafayette, dated the 21st and 24th of August, from his camp at the Forks of York River in Virginia. The embarkation at Portsmouth, which the marquis had supposed might be intended for New York, was merely for Yorktown, where Cornwallis had determined to establish the permanent post ordered in his instructions.

Yorktown was a small place situated on a projecting bank on the south side of York River, opposite a promontory called Gloucester Point. The river between was not more than a mile wide, but deep enough to admit ships of a large size and burthen. Here concentrating his forces, he had proceeded to fortify the opposite points, calculating to have the works finished by the beginning of October; at which time Sir Henry Clinton

intended to recommence operations on the Chesapeake. Believing that he had no present enemy but Lafayette to guard against, Cornwallis felt so secure in his position, that he wrote to Sir Henry on the 22d of August, offering to detach a thousand or twelve hundred men to strengthen New York against the apprehended attack of the combined armies.

While Cornwallis, undervaluing his youthful adversary, felt thus secure, Lafayette, in conformity to the instructions of Washington, was taking measures to cut off any retreat by land which his lordship might attempt on the arrival of De Grasse. With this view he called upon General Thomas Nelson, the Governor of Virginia, for six hundred of the militia to be collected upon Blackwater; detached troops to the south of James River, under pretext of a design to dislodge the British from Portsmouth, and requested General Wayne to move southward, to be ready to cross James River at Westover.

As to himself, Lafayette was prepared, as soon as he should hear of the arrival of De Grasse, to march at once to Williamsburg and form a junction with the troops which were to be landed from the fleet. Thus a net was quietly drawn round Cornwallis by the youthful general, while the veteran felt himself so secure that he was talking of detaching troops to New York.

Lafayette, at the time of writing his despatches, was ignorant that Washington had taken command of the expedition coming to his aid, and expressed an affectionate solicitude on the subject. "In the present state of affairs, my dear general," writes he, "I hope you will come yourself to Virginia, and that, if the French army moves this way, I will have at least the satisfaction of beholding you, myself, at the head of the combined armies." In concluding his letter, he writes: "Adieu, my dear general. I heartily thank you for having ordered me to remain in Virginia; and to your goodness to me I am owing the most beautiful prospect I may ever behold."

The letter of Lafayette gave no account of the Count de Grasse, and Washington expressed himself distressed beyond measure to know what had become of that commander. He had heard of an English fleet at sea steering for the Chesapeake, and feared it might arrive and frustrate all the flattering prospects in that quarter. Still, as usual, he looked to the bright side. "Of many contingencies," writes he, "we will hope for the most propitious events. Should the retreat of Lord Cornwallis by water be cut off by the arrival of either of the French fleets, I am persuaded you will do all in your power

to prevent his escape by land. May that great felicity be reserved for you."

Washington left Philadelphia on the 5th of September, on his way to the Head of Elk. About three miles below Chester, he was met by an express bearing tidings of the arrival of the Count de Grasse in the Chesapeake with twenty-eight ships of the line. Washington instantly rode back to Chester to rejoice with the Count de Rochambeau, who was coming down to that place from Philadelphia by water. They had a joyous dinner together, after which Washington proceeded in the evening on his destination.

The express meantime reached Philadelphia most opportunely. There had been a grand review of the French troops, at which the President of Congress and all the fashion of the city were present. It was followed by a banquet given to the officers by the French Minister, the Chevalier de Luzerne. Scarce were the company seated at table, when despatches came announcing the arrival of De Grasse and the landing of three thousand troops under the Marquis St. Simon, who, it was added, had opened a communication with Lafayette.

All now was mutual gratulation at the banquet. The news soon went forth and spread throughout the city. Acclamations were to be heard on all sides, and crowds assembling before the house of the French Minister rent the air with hearty buzzes for Louis the Sixteenth.

Washington reached the Head of Elk on the 6th. The troops and a great part of the stores were already arrived, and beginning to embark. Thence he wrote to the Count de Grasse, felicitating him on his arrival; and informing him that the van of the two armies were about to embark and fall down the Chesapeake, form a junction with the troops under the Count de St. Simon and the Marquis de Lafayette, and co-operate in blocking up Cornwallis in York River, so as to prevent his retreat by land or his getting any supplies from the country. "As it will be of the greatest importance," writes he, "to prevent the escape of his lordship from his present position, I am persuaded that every measure which prudence can dictate will be adopted for that purpose, until the arrival of our complete force, when I hope his lordship will be compelled to yield his ground to the superior power of our combined forces."

Every thing had thus far gone on well, but there were not vessels enough at the Head of Elk for the immediate transportation of all the troops, ordnance and stores; a part of the troops would have to proceed to Baltimore by land. Leaving

General Heath to bring on the American forces, and the Baron de Viomenil the French. Washington, accompanied by De Rochambeau, crossed the Susquehanna early on the 8th, and pushed forward for Baltimore. He was met by a deputation of the citizens, who made him a public address, to which he replied, and his arrival was celebrated in the evening with illuminations.

On the 9th he left Baltimore a little after daybreak, accompanied only by Colonel Humphreys; the rest of his suite were to follow at their ease; for himself, he was determined to reach Mount Vernon that evening. Six years had elapsed since last he was under its roof; six wearing years of toil, of danger, and of constant anxiety. During all that time, and amid all his military cares, he had kept up a regular weekly correspondence with his steward or agent, regulating all the affairs of his rural establishment with as much exactness as he did those of the army.

It was a late hour when he arrived at Mount Vernon; where he was joined by his suite at dinner time on the following day, and by the Count de Rochambeau in the evening. General Chastellux and his aides-de-camp arrived there on the 11th, and Mount Vernon was now crowded with guests, who were all entertained in the ample style of old Virginia hospitality. On the 12th, tearing himself away once more from the home of his heart, Washington with his military associates continued onward to join Lafayette at Williamsburg.



THE LIFE  
OF  
GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY  
WASHINGTON IRVING.

*IN FOUR VOLUMES.*

VOLUME IV.



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## PREFACE.

THE present volume completes a work to which the author had long looked forward as the crowning effort of his literary career.

The idea of writing a life of Washington entered at an early day into his mind. It was especially pressed upon his attention nearly thirty years ago while he was in Europe, by a proposition of the late Mr. Archibald Constable, the eminent publisher of Edinburgh, and he resolved to undertake it as soon as he should return to the United States, and be within reach of the necessary documents. Various circumstances occurred to prevent him from carrying this resolution into prompt effect. It remained, however, a cherished purpose of his heart, which he has at length, though somewhat tardily, accomplished.

The manuscript for the present volume was nearly ready for the press some months since, but the author, by applying himself too closely in his eagerness to finish it, brought on a nervous indisposition, which unfitted him for a time for the irksome but indispensable task of revision. In this he has been kindly assisted by his nephew, Pierre Munro Irving, who had previously aided him in the course of his necessary researches, and who now carefully collated the manuscript with the works, letters,<sup>t</sup> and incited documents from which the facts had been derived. He has likewise had the kindness to superintend the printing of the volume, and the correction of the proof sheets. Thus aided, the author is enabled to lay the volume before the public.

How far this, the last labor of his pen, may meet with general acceptance is with him a matter of hope rather than of confidence. He is conscious of his own short-comings, and of the splendid achievements of oratory of which the character of Washington has recently been made the theme. Grateful, however, for the kindly disposition which has greeted each successive volume, and with a profound sense of the indulgence

he has experienced from the public through a long literary career, now extending through more than half a century, he resigns his last volume to its fate, with a feeling of satisfaction that he has at length reached the close of his task, and with the comforting assurance that it has been with him a labor of love, and as such has to a certain degree carried with it its own reward.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

SUNNYSIDE, *April*, 1859.

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# LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

## CHAPTER I.

**CORNWALLIS AROUSED TO HIS DANGER — HIS RETREAT TO THE CAROLINAS CUT OFF — STRENGTHENS HIS WORKS — ACTION BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND BRITISH FLEETS — WASHINGTON AND DE ROCHAMBEAU VISIT THE FRENCH FLEET — OPERATIONS BEFORE YORKTOWN.**

LORD CORNWALLIS had been completely roused from his dream of security by the appearance, on the 28th of August, of the fleet of Count de Grasse within the capes of the Delaware. Three French ships of the line and a frigate soon anchored at the mouth of York River. The boats of the fleet were immediately busy conveying three thousand three hundred land forces, under the Marquis de St. Simon, up James River to form the preconcerted junction with those under Lafayette.

Awakened to his danger, Cornwallis, as Washington had foreseen, meditated a retreat to the Carolinas. It was too late. York River was blocked up by French ships; James River was filled with armed vessels covering the transportation of the troops. His lordship reconnoitered Williamsburg; it was too strong to be forced, and Wayne had crossed James River to join his troops to those under the marquis. Seeing his retreat cut off in every direction, Cornwallis proceeded to strengthen his works; sending off repeated expresses to apprise Sir Henry Clinton of his perilous situation.

The Count de Grasse, eager to return to the West Indies, urged Lafayette to make an immediate attack upon the British army, with the American and French troops under his command, without waiting for the combined force under Washington and Rochambeau, offering to aid him with marines and sailors from the ships. The admiral was seconded by the Marquis de St. Simon. They represented that the works at York-

town were yet incomplete ; and that that place and Gloucester immediately opposite, might be carried by storm by their superior force. It was a brilliant achievement which they held out to tempt the youthful commander, but he remained undazzled. He would not, for the sake of personal distinction, lavish the lives of the brave men confided to him ; but would await the arrival of the combined forces, when success might be attained with little loss, and would leave to Washington the *coup de grace* ; in all probability the closing triumph of the war.

The Count de Grasse had been but a few days anchored within the Chesapeake, and fifteen hundred of his seamen were absent, conveying the troops up James River, when Admiral Graves, who then commanded the British naval force on the American coast, appeared with twenty sail off the capes of Virginia. De Grasse, anxious to protect the squadron of the Count de Barras, which was expected from Rhode Island, and which it was the object of Graves to intercept, immediately slipped his cables and put to sea with twenty-four ships, leaving the rest to blockade York and James Rivers.

Washington received information of the sailing of the fleet from the capes, shortly after his departure from Mount Vernon, and instantly despatched missives, ordering the troops who were embarked at the Head of Elk to stop until the receipt of further intelligence, fearing that the navigation in Chesapeake Bay might not be secure. For two days he remained in anxious uncertainty, until, at Bowling Green, he was relieved by favorable rumors concerning the fleet, which were confirmed on his arriving at Williamsburg on the evening of the 14th.

Admiral Graves, it appeared, on the sailing forth of the French fleet, immediately prepared for action, although he had five ships less than De Grasse. The latter, however, was not disposed to accept the challenge, his force being weakened by the absence of so many of his seamen, employed in transporting troops. His plan was to occupy the enemy by partial action and skilful manœuvres, so as to retain his possession of the Chesapeake, and cover the arrival of De Barras.

The vans of the two fleets, and some ships of the centre, engaged about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 7th of September. The conflict soon became animated. Several ships were damaged, and many men killed and wounded on both sides.

De Grasse, who had the advantage of the wind, drew off after sunset ; satisfied with the damage done and sustained and not disposed for a general action ; nor was the British

admiral inclined to push the engagement so near night, and on a hostile coast. Among his ships that had suffered, one had been so severely handled, that she was no longer seaworthy, and had to be burnt. For four days the fleets remained in sight of each other, repairing damages and manœuvring, but the French having still the advantage of the wind, maintained their prudent policy of avoiding a general engagement. At length De Grasse, learning that De Barras was arrived within the capes, formed a junction with him, and returned with him to his former anchoring ground, with two English frigates which he had captured. Admiral Graves, disappointed in his hope of intercepting De Barras, and finding the Chesapeake guarded by a superior force with which he could not prudently contend; having, moreover, to encounter the autumnal gales in the battered state of several of his ships, left the coast and bore away for New York. Under convoy of the squadron of De Barras came a fleet of transports, conveying land forces under M. de Choisy, with siege artillery and military stores. It should be mentioned to the credit of De Barras, that, in his orders from the French minister of marine to come to America, he was left at liberty to make a cruise on the banks of Newfoundland; so as not to be obliged to serve under De Grasse, who was his inferior in rank, but whom the minister wished to continue in the command. "But De Barras," writes Lafayette, "nobly took the part of conducting, himself, the artillery from Rhode Island, and of coming with all his vessels and placing himself under orders of an admiral his junior in service."<sup>1</sup>

From Williamsburg, Washington sent forward Count Fersen, one of the aides-de-camp of De Rochambeau, to hurry on the French troops with all possible despatch. He wrote to the same purport to General Lincoln: "Every day we now lose," said he, "is comparatively an age; as soon as it is in our power with safety, we ought to take our position near the enemy. Hurry on, then, my dear sir, with your troops, on the wings of speed. The want of our men and stores is now all that retards our immediate operations. Lord Cornwallis is improving every moment to the best advantage; and every day that is given him to make his preparations may cost us many lives to encounter them."

It was with great satisfaction Washington learned that Admiral de Barras had anticipated his wishes, in sending trans-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Lafayette*, t. i. p. 467.

ports and prize vessels up the bay to assist in bringing on the French troops. In the mean time he with Count de Rochambeau was desirous of having an interview with the admiral on board of his ship, provided he could send some fast-sailing cutter to receive them. A small ship, the *Queen Charlotte*, was furnished by the admiral for the purpose. It had been captured on its voyage from Charleston to New York, having Lord Rawdon on board, and had been commodiously fitted up for his lordship's reception.

On board of this vessel Washington and De Rochambeau, with the Chevalier de Chastellux and Generals Knox and Duportail, embarked on the 18th, and proceeding down James River, came the next morning in sight of the French fleet riding at anchor in Lynn Haven Bay, just under the point of Cape Henry. About noon they got alongside of the admiral's ship, the *Ville de Paris*, and were received on board with great ceremony, and naval and military parade. Admiral de Grasse was a tall, fine-looking man, plain in his address and prompt in the discharge of business. A plan of co-operation was soon arranged, to be carried into effect on the arrival of the American and French armies from the North, which were actually on their way down the Chesapeake from the Head of Elk. Business being despatched, dinner was served, after which they were conducted throughout the ships, and received the visits of the officers of the fleet, almost all of whom came on board.

About sunset Washington and his companions took their leave of the admiral, and returned on board their own little ship; when the yards of all the ships of the fleet were manned, and a parting salute was thundered from the *Ville de Paris*. Owing to storms and contrary winds, and other adverse circumstances, the party did not reach Williamsburg until the 22d, when intelligence was received that threatened to disconcert all the plans formed in the recent council on board ship. Admiral Digby, it appeared, had arrived in New York with six ships of the line and a re-enforcement of troops. This intelligence Washington instantly transmitted to the Count de Grasse by one of the Count de Rochambeau's aides-de-camp. De Grasse in reply expressed great concern, observing that the position of affairs was changed by the arrival of Digby. "The enemy," writes he, "is now nearly equal to us in strength, and it would be imprudent in me to place myself in a situation that would prevent my attacking them should they attempt to afford succor." He proposed, therefore, to

leave two vessels at the mouth of York River, and the corvettes and frigates in James River, which, with the French troops on shore, would be sufficient assistance; and to put to sea with the rest, either to intercept the enemy and fight them where there was good sea-room, or to blockade them in New York should they not have sailed.

On reading this letter, Washington dreaded that the present plan of co-operation might likewise fall through, and the fruits of all his schemes and combinations be lost when within his reach. With the assistance of the fleet, the reduction of Yorktown was demonstrably certain, and the surrender of the garrison must go far to terminate the war; whereas the departure of the ships, by leaving an opening for succor to the enemy, might frustrate these brilliant prospects and involve the whole enterprise in ruin and disgrace. Even a momentary absence of the French fleet might enable Cornwallis to evacuate Yorktown and effect a retreat, with the loss merely of his baggage and artillery, and perhaps a few soldiers. These and other considerations were urged in a letter to the count, remonstrating against his putting to sea. Lafayette was the bearer of the letter, and seconded it with so many particulars respecting the situation of the armies, and argued the case so earnestly and eloquently, that the count consented to remain. It was furthermore determined in a council of war of his officers, that a large part of the fleet should anchor in York River; four or five vessels be stationed so as pass up and down James River, and a battery for cannon and mortars be erected with the aid of the allied troops on Point Comfort.

By the 25th the American and French troops were mostly arrived and encamped near Williamsburg, and preparations were made for the decisive blow.

Yorktown, as has already been noted, is situated on the south side of York River, immediately opposite Gloucester Point. Cornwallis had fortified the town by seven redoubts and six batteries on the land side, connected by intrenchments; and there was a line of batteries along the river. The town was flanked on each side by deep ravines and creeks emptying into York River; their heads, in front of the town, being not more than half a mile apart. The enemy had availed themselves of these natural defences, in the arrangement of extensive outworks, with redoubts strengthened by abatis; field-works mounted with cannon, and trees cut down and left with the branches pointed outward.

Gloucester Point had likewise been fortified. Its batteries,

with those of Yorktown, commanding the intervening river. Ships-of-war were likewise stationed on it, protected by the guns of the forts, and the channel was obstructed by sunken vessels.

The defence of Gloucester Point was confided to Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas, with six or seven hundred men. The enemy's main army was encamped about Yorktown, within the range of the outer redoubts and field-works.

Washington and his staff bivouacked that night on the ground in the open air. He slept under a mulberry tree, the root serving for his pillow. On the following morning the two armies drew out on each side of Beaver Dam Creek. The Americans, forming the right wing, took station on the east side of the creek; the French, forming the left wing, on the west.

That evening Cornwallis received despatches from Sir Henry Clinton, informing him of the arrival of Admiral Digby, and that a fleet of twenty-three ships of the line, with about five thousand troops, would sail to his assistance probably on the 5th of October. A heavy firing would be made by them on arriving at the entrance of the Chesapeake. On hearing it, if all went well at Yorktown, his lordship was to make three separate columns of smoke; and four, should he still possess the post at Gloucester Point.

Cornwallis immediately wrote in reply: "I have ventured these last two days to look General Washington's whole force in the face in the position on the outside of my works, and have the pleasure to assure your Excellency, that there is but one wish throughout the army, which is that the enemy would advance. . . . I shall retire this night within the works, and have no doubt, if relief arrives in any reasonable time, York and Gloucester will be both in the possession of His Majesty's troops. I believe your Excellency must depend more on the sounds of our cannon than the signals of smoke for information; however, I will attempt it on the Gloucester side."<sup>1</sup>

That night his lordship accordingly abandoned his outworks, and drew his troops within the town; a measure strongly censured by Tarleton in his Commentaries as premature; as cooping up the troops in narrow quarters, and giving up a means of disputing, inch by inch, the approaches of the besiegers, and thus gaining time to complete the fortifications of the town.

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence relative to defence of York, p. 199.



The outworks thus abandoned were seized upon the next morning by detachments of American light infantry and French troops, and served to cover the troops employed in throwing up breastworks. Colonel Alexander Scammel, officer of the day, while reconnoitring the ground abandoned by the enemy, was set upon by a party of Hessian troopers. He attempted to escape, but was wounded, captured, and carried off to Yorktown. Washington, to whom he had formerly acted as aide-de-camp, interested himself in his favor, and at his request Cornwallis permitted him to be removed to Williamsburg, where he died in the course of a few days. He was an officer of much merit, and his death was deeply regretted by Washington and the army.

The combined French and American forces were now twelve thousand strong, exclusive of the Virginia militia which Governor Nelson had brought into the field. An instance of patriotic self-devotion on the part of this functionary is worthy of special record. The treasury of Virginia was empty; the governor, fearful that the militia would disband for want of pay, had endeavored to procure a loan from a wealthy individual on the credit of the State. In the precarious situation of affairs, the guarantee was not deemed sufficient. The governor pledged his own property and obtained the loan at his individual risk.

On the morning of the 28th of September, the combined armies marched from Williamsburg towards Yorktown, about twelve miles distant, and encamped at night within two miles of it, driving in the pickets and some patrols of cavalry. General de Choisy was sent across York River, with Lauzun's legion and General Weedon's brigade of militia, to watch the enemy on the side of Gloucester Point.

By the 1st of October the line of the besiegers, nearly two miles from the works, formed a semicircle, each end resting on the river, so that the investment by land was complete; while the Count de Grasse, with the main fleet, remained in Lynn Haven Bay, to keep off assistance by sea.

About this time the Americans threw up two redoubts in the night, which, on being discovered in the morning, were severely cannonaded. Three of the men were killed and several severely wounded. While Washington was superintending the works, a shot struck the ground close by him, throwing up a cloud of dust. The Rev. Mr. Evans, chaplain in the army, who was standing by him, was greatly agitated. Taking off his hat and showing it covered with sand, "See here, General,"

exclaimed he. "Mr. Evans," said Washington with grave pleasantry, "you had better carry that home, and show it to your wife and children."<sup>1</sup>

The besieged army began now to be greatly distressed for want of forage, and had to kill many of their horses, the carcasses of which were continually floating down the river. In the evening of the 2d of October, Tarleton with his legion and the mounted infantry were passed over the river to Gloucester Point, to assist in foraging. At daybreak Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas led out part of his garrison to forage the neighboring country. About ten o'clock the wagons and bat horses laden with Indian corn were returning, covered by a party of infantry, with Tarleton and his dragoons as a rear-guard. The wagons and infantry had nearly reached York River, when word was brought that an enemy was advancing in force. The report was confirmed by a cloud of dust from which emerged Lauzun and the French hussars and lancers.

Tarleton, with part of his legion, advanced to meet them: the rest, with Simcoe's dragoons, remained as a rear-guard in a skirt of woods. A skirmish ensued, gallantly sustained on each side, but the superiority of Tarleton's horses gave him the advantage. General Choisy hastened up with a corps of cavalry and infantry to support the hussars. In the medley fight, a dragoon's horse wounded by a lance, plunged, and overthrew both Tarleton and his steed. The rear-guard rushed from their covert to rescue their commander. They came galloping up in such disorder, that they were roughly received by Lauzun's hussars, who were drawn up on the plain. In the mean time Tarleton scrambled out of the *mêlée*, mounted another horse, and ordered a retreat, to enable his men to recover from their confusion. Dismounting forty infantry, he placed them in a thicket. Their fire checked the hussars in their pursuit. The British dragoons rallied, and were about to charge; when the hussars retired behind their infantry; and a fire was opened upon the British by some militia from behind a fence. Tarleton again ordered a retreat to be sounded, and the conflict came to an end. The loss of the British in killed and wounded was one officer and eleven men; that of the French two officers and fourteen hussars. This was the last affair of Tarleton and his legion in the Revolutionary war.

The next day General Choisy, being re-enforced by a detach-

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<sup>1</sup> Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 336.

ment of marines from the fleet of De Grasse, cut off all communication by land between Gloucester and the country.

At this momentous time, when the first parallel before the besieged city was about to be opened, Washington received despatches from his faithful coadjutor, General Greene, giving him important intelligence of his co-operations in the South; to consider which we will suspend for a moment our narrative of affairs before Yorktown.

## CHAPTER II.

GREENE ON THE HIGH HILLS OF SANTEE — THE ENEMY HARASSED  
— GREENE MARCHES AGAINST STUART — BATTLE NEAR EUTAW  
SPRINGS.

For some weeks in the months of July and August, General Greene had remained encamped with his main force on the high hills of Santee, refreshing and disciplining his men, and awaiting the arrival of promised re-enforcements. He was constantly looking to Washington as his polar star by which to steer, and feared despatches from him had been intercepted. "I wait with impatience for intelligence," said he, "by which I mean to govern my own operations. If things are flattering in the North, I will hazard less in the South; but, if otherwise there, we must risk more here." In the mean time, Marion with his light troops, aided by Colonel Washington with his dragoons, held control over the lower Santee. Lee was detached to operate with Sumter's brigade on the Congaree, and Colonel Harden with his mounted militia was scouring the country about the Edisto. The enemy was thus harassed in every quarter; their convoys and foraging parties waylaid; and Stuart was obliged to obtain all his supplies from below.

Greene was disappointed as to re-enforcements. All that he received were two hundred North Carolina levies and five hundred South Carolina militia: still he prepared for a bold effort to drive the enemy from their remaining posts. For that purpose, on the 22d of August he broke up his encampment on the "benign hills of Santee," to march against Colonel Stuart. The latter still lay encamped about sixteen miles distant in a straight line; but the Congaree and Wateree lay between, bordered by swamps overflowed by recent rains: to cross them and reach the hostile camp, it was necessary to make a circuit

of seventy miles. While Greene was making it Stuart abandoned his position, and moved down forty miles to the vicinity of Eutaw Springs, where he was re-enforced by a detachment from Charleston with provisions.

Greene followed on by easy marches. He had been joined by General Pickens with a party of Ninety-Six militia, and by the State troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Henderson; and now moved slowly to give time for Marion, who was scouring the country about the Edisto, to rejoin him. This was done on the 5th of September at Laurens' place, within seventeen miles of Stuart's camp. Here baggage, tents, every thing that could impede motion, was left behind, and on the afternoon of the 7th the army was pushed on within seven miles of the Eutaws, where it bivouacked for the night, Greene lying on the ground wrapped in his cloak, with the root of a tree for a pillow.

At four o'clock in the morning his little army was in motion. His whole force at that time did not exceed two thousand men; that of the enemy he was seeking, about twenty-three hundred. The Americans, however, were superior in cavalry. Owing to the difficulty of receiving information, and the country being covered with forests, the enemy were not aware of Greene's approach until he was close upon them.

His army advanced in two columns, which were to form the two lines of battle. The first column, commanded by General Marion, was composed of two battalions of North and two of South Carolina militia. The second column of three brigades; one of North Carolina, one of Virginia, and one of Maryland Continental troops. Colonel Lee with his legion covered the right flank, Colonel Henderson the left. Colonel Washington, with his dragoons and the Delaware troops, formed the reserve. Each column had two field-pieces.

Within four miles of Eutaw they met with a British detachment of one hundred and fifty infantry and fifty cavalry under Major Coffin, sent forward to reconnoitre; it was put to flight after a severe skirmish, in which a number were killed and wounded, and several taken prisoners. Supposing this to be the van of the enemy, Greene halted his columns and formed. The South Carolinians in equal divisions formed the right and left of the first line, the North Carolinians the centre. General Marion commanded the right; General Pickens, the left; Colonel Malmedy, the centre. Colonel Henderson with the State troops covered the left of the line; Colonel Lee with his legion the right.

Of the second line, composed of regulars, the North Caroli-

nians, under General Sumner, were on the right; the Marylanders, under Colonel Williams, on the left; the Virginians, under Colonel Campbell, in the centre.

Colonel Washington with his cavalry followed in the rear as a corps de reserve.

Two three-pounders moved on the road in the centre of the first line. Two six-pounders in a like position in the second line.

In this order the troops moved forward, keeping their lines as well as they could through open woods, which covered the country on each side of the road.

Within a mile of the camp they encountered a body of infantry thrown forward by Colonel Stuart, to check their advance while he had time to form his troops in order of battle. These were drawn up in line in a wood two hundred yards west of Eutaw Springs. The right rested on Eutaw Creek (or brook), and was covered by a battalion of grenadiers and infantry under Major Majoribanks, partly concealed among thickets on the margin of the stream. The left of the line extended across the Charleston road, with a reserve corps in a commanding situation covering the road. About fifty yards in the rear of the British line was a cleared field, in which was their encampment, with the tents all standing. Adjoining it was a brick house with a palisadoed garden, which Colonel Stuart intended as a protection, if too much pressed by cavalry.

The advanced party of infantry, which had retired firing before the Americans, formed on the flanks of Colonel Stuart's line. The Carolinian militia had pressed after them. About nine o'clock the action was commenced by the left of the American line, and soon became general. The militia fought for a time with the spirit and firmness of regulars. Their two field-pieces were dismounted; so was one of the enemy's; and there was great carnage on both sides. The militia fought until they had expended seventeen rounds, when they gave way, covered by Lee and Henderson, who fought bravely on the flanks of the line.

Sumner, with the regulars who formed the second line, advanced in fine style to take the place of the first. The enemy likewise brought their reserve into action; the conflict continued to be bloody and severe. Colonel Henderson, who commanded the State troops in the second line, was severely wounded; this caused some confusion. Sumner's brigade, formed partly of recruits, gave way under the superior fire of the enemy. The British rushed forward to secure their fancied

victory. Greene, seeing their line disordered, instantly ordered Williams with his Marylanders to "sweep the field with the bayonet." Williams was seconded by Colonel Campbell with the Virginians. The order was gallantly obeyed. They delivered a deadly volley at forty yards' distance, and then advanced at a brisk rate, with loud shouts and trailed arms, prepared to make the deadly thrust. The British recoiled. While the Marylanders and Virginians attacked them in front, Lee with his legion turned their left flank and charged them in rear. Colonel Hampton with the State cavalry made a great number of prisoners, and Colonel Washington, coming up with his reserve of horse and foot, completed their defeat. They were driven back through their camp; many were captured; many fled along the Charleston road, and others threw themselves into the brick house.

Major Majoribanks and his troops could still enfilade the left flank of the Americans from their covert among the thickets on the border of the stream. Greene ordered Colonel Washington with his dragoons and Kirkwood's Delaware infantry to dislodge them, and Colonel Wade Hampton to assist with the State troops. Colonel Washington, without waiting for the infantry, dashed forward with his dragoons. It was a rash move. The thickets were impervious to cavalry. The dragoons separated into small squads, and endeavored to force their way in. Horses and riders were shot down or bayoneted; most of the officers were either killed or wounded. Colonel Washington had his horse shot under him; he himself was bayoneted, and would have been slain, had not a British officer interposed, who took him prisoner.

By the time Hampton and Kirkwood came up, the cavalry were routed; the ground was strewn with the dead and the wounded; horses were plunging and struggling in the agonies of death; others galloping about without their riders. While Hampton rallied the scattered cavalry, Kirkwood with his Delawares charged with bayonet upon the enemy in the thickets. Majoribanks fell back with his troops, and made a stand in the palisadoed garden of the brick house.

Victory now seemed certain on the side of the Americans. They had driven the British from the field, and had taken possession of their camp; unfortunately, the soldiers, thinking the day their own, fell to plundering the tents, devouring the food and carousing on the liquors found there. Many of them became intoxicated and unmanageable — the officers interfered in vain; all was riot and disorder.

The enemy in the mean time recovered from their confusion, and opened a fire from every window of the house and from the palisadoed garden. There was a scattering fire also from the woods and thickets on the right and left. Four cannon, one of which had been captured from the enemy, were now advanced by the Americans to batter the house. The fire from the windows was so severe, that most of the officers and men who served the cannon were either killed or wounded. Greene ordered the survivors to retire: they did so, leaving the cannon behind.

Colonel Stuart was by this time rallying his left wing, and advancing to support the right; when Greene, finding his ammunition nearly exhausted, determined to give up the attempt to dislodge the enemy from their places of refuge, since he could not do it without severe loss; whereas the enemy could maintain their posts but a few hours, and he should have a better opportunity of attacking them on their retreat.

He remained on the ground long enough to collect his wounded, excepting those who were too much under the fire of the house, and then, leaving Colonel Hampton with a strong picket on the field, he returned to the position seven miles off, which he had left in the morning; not finding water anywhere nearer.

The enemy decamped in the night after destroying a large quantity of provisions, staving many barrels of rum, and breaking upwards of a thousand stand of arms which they threw into the springs of the Eutaw; they left behind also seventy of their wounded, who might have impeded the celerity of their retreat. Their loss in killed, wounded, and captured, in this action, was six hundred and thirty-three, of whom five hundred were prisoners in the hands of the Americans; the loss sustained by the latter in killed, wounded and missing, was five hundred and thirty-five. One of the slain most deplored was Colonel Campbell, who had so bravely led on the Virginians. He fell in the shock of the charge with the bayonet. It was a glorious close of a gallant career. In his dying moments he was told of the defeat of the enemy, and is said to have uttered the celebrated ejaculation of General Wolfe, "I die contented."

In the morning, General Greene, who knew not that the enemy had decamped, detached Lee and Marion to scour the country between Eutaw Springs and Charleston, to intercept any re-enforcements which might be coming to Colonel Stuart, and to retard the march of the latter should he be retreating. Stuart, however, had met with re-enforcements about fourteen

miles from Eutaw, but continued his retreat to Monk's Corner, within twenty-five miles of Charleston.

Greene, when informed of the retreat, had followed with his main force almost to Monk's Corner; finding the number and position of the enemy too strong to be attacked with prudence, he fell back to Eutaw, where he remained a day or two to rest his troops, and then returned by easy marches to his old position near the heights of Santee.

Thence, as usual, he despatched an account of affairs to Washington. "Since I wrote to you before, we have had a most bloody battle." It was by far the most obstinate fight I ever saw. Victory was ours; and had it not been for one of those little incidents which frequently happen in the progress of war, we should have taken the whole British army. . . . I am trying to collect a body of militia to oppose Lord Cornwallis should he attempt to escape through North Carolina to Charleston. Charleston itself may be reduced, if you will bend your forces this way, and it will give me great pleasure to join your Excellency in the attempt; for I shall be equally happy, whether as a principal or subordinate, so that the public good is promoted."

Such was the purport of the intelligence received from Greene. Washington considered the affair at Eutaw Springs a victory, and sent Greene his congratulations. "Fortune," writes he, "must have been coy indeed, had she not yielded at last to so persevering a pursuer as you have been."

"I can say with sincerity, that I feel with the highest degree of pleasure the good effects which you mention as resulting from the perfect good understanding between you, the marquis and myself. I hope it will never be interrupted, and I am sure it never can be while we are all influenced by the same pure motive, that of love to our country and interest in the cause in which we are embarked."

We will now resume our narrative of the siege of Yorktown.

### CHAPTER III.

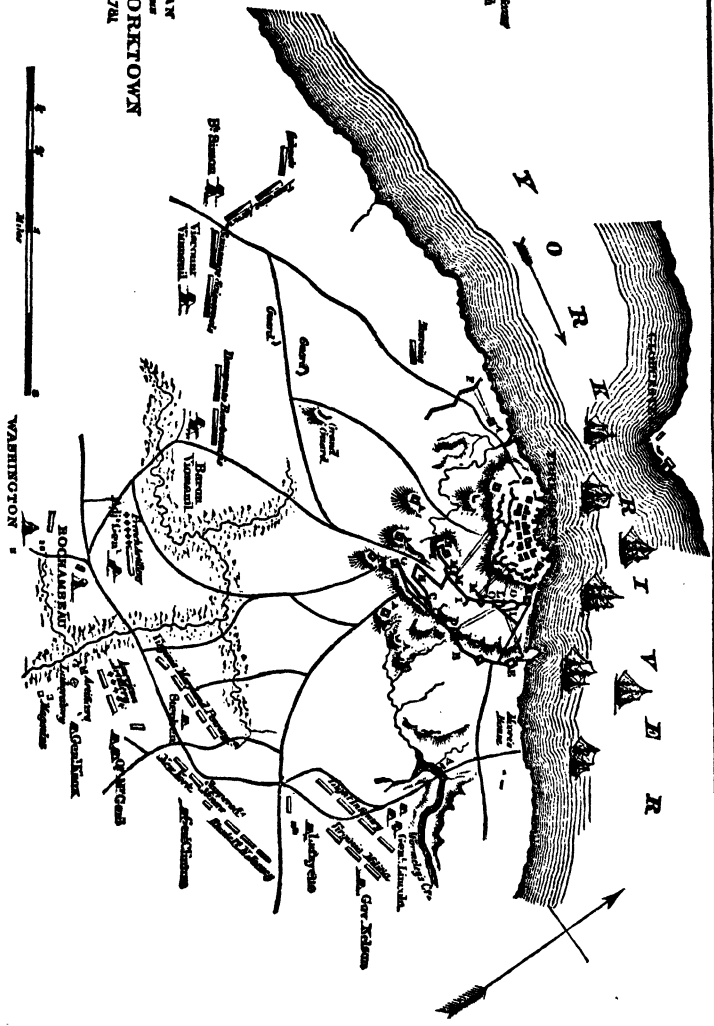
#### SIEGE AND SURRENDER OF YORKTOWN.

GENERAL LINCOLN had the honor, on the night of the 6th of October, of opening the first parallel before Yorktown. It was within six hundred yards of the enemy; nearly two miles in ex-



- A. British vessels
- B. Fort Mifflin
- C. American Battery
- D. American Battery
- E. J. French Battery
- F. French Battery
- G. French Battery
- H. French Battery
- I. French Battery
- J. French Battery
- K. French Battery
- L. French Battery
- M. French Battery
- N. French Battery
- O. American Battery

**PLAN  
OF THE  
SIEGE OF YORKTOWN  
OCTOBER**





tent, and the foundations were laid for two redoubts. He had under him a large detachment of French and American troops, and the work was conducted with such silence and secrecy in a night of extreme darkness, that the enemy were not aware of it until daylight. A severe cannonade was then opened from the fortifications; but the men were under cover and continued working; the greatest emulation and good-will prevailing between the officers and soldiers of the allied armies thus engaged.

By the afternoon of the 9th the parallel was completed, and two or three batteries were ready to fire upon the town. "General Washington put the match to the first gun," says an observer who was present; "a furious discharge of cannon and mortars immediately followed, and Earl Cornwallis received his first salutation."<sup>1</sup>

Governor Nelson, who had so nobly pledged his own property to raise funds for the public service, gave another proof of his self-sacrificing patriotism on this occasion. He was asked which part of the town could be most effectively cannonaded. He pointed to a large handsome house on a rising ground as the probable head-quarters of the enemy. It proved to be his own.<sup>2</sup>

The governor had an uncle in the town, very old, and afflicted with the gout. He had been for thirty years secretary under the royal colonial government, and was still called Mr. Secretary Nelson. He had taken no part in the Revolution, unfitted, perhaps, for the struggle, by his advanced age and his infirmities; and had remained in Yorktown when taken possession of by the English, not having any personal enmity to apprehend from them. He had two sons in Washington's army, who now were in the utmost alarm for his safety. At their request Washington sent in a flag, desiring that their father might be permitted to leave the place. "I was a witness," writes the Count de Chastellux in his Memoirs, "of the cruel anxiety of one of those young men, as he kept his eyes fixed upon the gate of the town by which the flag would come out. It seemed as if he were awaiting his own sentence in the reply that was to be received. Lord Cornwallis had not the inhumanity to refuse so just a request."

The appearance of the venerable secretary, his stately person, noble countenance and gray hairs, commanded respect and veneration. "I can never recall without emotion," writes

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<sup>1</sup> Thacher's Military Journal.

<sup>2</sup> Given on the authority of Lafayette. Sparks, viii. 201.

the susceptible count, "his arrival at the head-quarters of General Washington. He was seated, his attack of the gout still continuing, and while we stood around him, he related with a serene visage what had been the effect of our batteries."<sup>1</sup>

His house had received some of the first shots; one of his negroes had been killed, and the head-quarters of Lord Cornwallis had been so battered, that he had been driven out of them.

The cannonade was kept up almost incessantly for three or four days from the batteries above mentioned, and from three others managed by the French. "Being in the trenches every other night and day," writes an observer already quoted,<sup>2</sup> "I have a fine opportunity of witnessing the sublime and stupendous scene which is continually exhibiting. The bombshells from the besiegers and the besieged are incessantly crossing each other's path in the air. They are clearly visible in the form of a black ball in the day, but in the night they appear like a fiery meteor with a blazing tail, most beautifully brilliant, ascending majestically from the mortar to a certain altitude, and gradually descending to the spot where they are destined to execute their work of destruction. When a shell falls, it whirls round, burrows and excavates the earth to a considerable extent, and, bursting, makes dreadful havoc around." "Some of our shells, over-reaching the town, are seen to fall into the river, and bursting, throw up columns of water like the spouting monsters of the deep."

The half-finished works of the enemy suffered severely, the guns were dismounted or silenced, and many men killed. The red-hot shot from the French batteries north-west of the town reached the English shipping. The *Charon*, a forty-four-gun ship, and three large transports, were set on fire by them. The flames ran up the rigging to the tops of the masts. The conflagration, seen in the darkness of the night, with the accompanying flash and thundering of cannon, and soaring and bursting of shells; and the tremendous explosions of the ships, all presented a scene of mingled magnificence and horror.

On the night of the 11th the second parallel was opened by the Baron Steuben's division, within three hundred yards of the works. The British now made new embrasures, and for two or three days kept up a galling fire upon those at work.

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<sup>1</sup> Chastellux, vol. II. pp. 19-23.

<sup>2</sup> Thacher.

The latter were still more annoyed by the flanking fire of two redoubts three hundred yards in front of the British works. As they enfiladed the intrenchments, and were supposed also to command the communication between Yorktown and Gloucester, it was resolved to storm them both, on the night of the 14th; the one nearest the river by a detachment of Americans commanded by Lafayette; the other by a French detachment led by the Baron de Viomenil. The grenadiers of the regiment of Gatinais were to be at the head of the French detachment. This regiment had been formed out of that of Auvergne, of which De Rochambeau had been colonel, and which, by its brave and honorable conduct, had won the appellation of the regiment *D'Auvergne sans tache* (Auvergne without a stain). When De Rochambeau assigned the Gatinais grenadiers their post in the attack, he addressed to them a few soldier-like words. "My lads, I have need of you this night, and hope you will not forget that we have served together in that brave regiment of Auvergne sans tache." They instantly replied, that if he would promise to get their old name restored to them, they would sacrifice themselves to the last man. The promise was given.

In the arrangements for the American assault, Lafayette had given the honor of leading the advance to his own aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel Gimat. This instantly touched the military pride of Hamilton, who exclaimed against it as an unjust preference, it being his tour of duty. The marquis excused himself by alleging that the arrangement had been sanctioned by the commander-in-chief, and could not be changed by him. Hamilton forthwith made a spirited appeal by letter to Washington. The latter, who was ignorant of the circumstances of the case, sent for the marquis, and, finding that it really was Hamilton's tour of duty, directed that he should be reinstated in it, which was done.<sup>1</sup> It was therefore arranged that Colonel Gimat's battalion should lead the van, and be followed by that of Hamilton, and that the latter should command the whole advanced corps.<sup>2</sup>

About eight o'clock in the evening rockets were sent up as signals for the simultaneous attack. Hamilton, to his great joy, led the advance of the Americans. The men, without waiting for the sappers to demolish the abatis in regular style, pushed them aside or pulled them down with their hands, and scrambled over, like rough bush-fighters. Hamilton was the

<sup>1</sup> Lee's Memoirs of the War, ii. 342.

<sup>2</sup> Lafayette to Washington. Correspondence of the Rev., iii. 426.

first to mount the parapet, placing one foot on the shoulder of a soldier, who knelt on one knee for the purpose.<sup>1</sup> The men mounted after him. Not a musket was fired. The redoubt was carried at the point of the bayonet. The loss of the Americans was one sergeant and eight privates killed, seven officers and twenty-five non-commissioned officers and privates wounded. The loss of the enemy was eight killed and seventeen taken prisoners. Among the latter was Major Campbell, who had commanded the redoubt. A New Hampshire captain of artillery would have taken his life in revenge of the death of his favorite Colonel Scammel, but Colonel Hamilton prevented him. Not a man was killed after he ceased to resist.<sup>2</sup>

The French stormed the other redoubt, which was more strongly garrisoned, with equal gallantry, but less precipitation. They proceeded according to rule. The soldiers paused while the sappers removed the abatis, during which time they were exposed to a destructive fire, and lost more men than did the Americans in their headlong attack. As the Baron de Viomenil, who led the party, was thus waiting, Major Barbour, Lafayette's aide-de-camp, came through the tremendous fire of the enemy, with a message from the marquis, letting him know that he was in his redoubt, and wished to know where the baron was. "Tell the marquis," replied the latter, "that I am not in mine, but will be in it in five minutes."

The abatis being removed, the troops rushed to the assault. The Chevalier de Lameth, Lafayette's adjutant-general, was the first to mount the parapet of the redoubt, and received a volley at arms' length from the Hessians who manned it. Shot through both knees, he fell back into the ditch, and was conveyed away under care of his friend, the Count de Dumas. The Count de Deuxponts, leading on the royal grenadiers of the same name, was likewise wounded.

The grenadiers of the Gatinais regiment remembered the promise of De Rochambeau, and fought with true Gallic fire. One-third of them were slain, and among them Captain de Sireuil, a valiant officer of chasseurs; but the regiment by its bravery on this occasion regained from the king its proud name of the *Royal Auvergne*.

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<sup>1</sup> Leake's *Life of John Lamb*, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> Thacher, p. 341.

N.B. — Gordon, in his history of the war, asserts that Lafayette, with the consent of Washington, ordered that, in capturing the redoubt, no quarter should be shown; in retaliation of a massacre perpetrated at Fort Griswold. It is needless to contradict a statement so opposed to the characters of both. It has been denied by both Lafayette and Hamilton. Not one of the enemy was killed unless in action.

Washington was an intensely excited spectator of these assaults, on the result of which so much depended. He had dismounted, given his horse to a servant, and taken his stand in the grand battery with Generals Knox and Lincoln and their staffs. The risk he ran of a chance shot, while watching the attack through an embrasure, made those about him uneasy. One of his aides-de-camp ventured to observe that the situation was very much exposed. "If you think so," replied he gravely, "you are at liberty to step back."

Shortly afterwards a musket ball struck the cannon in the embrasure, rolled along it, and fell at his feet. General Knox grasped his arm. "My dear general," exclaimed he, "we can't spare you yet." "It is a spent ball," replied Washington quietly; "no harm is done."

When all was over and the redoubts were taken, he drew a long breath, and turning to Knox, observed, "The work is done, and well done!" Then called to his servant, "William, bring me my horse."

In his despatches he declared that in these assaults nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the troops. Lafayette also testified to the conduct of Colonel Hamilton, "whose well-known talents and gallantry," writes he, "were on this occasion most conspicuous and serviceable."<sup>1</sup>

The redoubts thus taken were included the same night in the second parallel, and howitzers were mounted upon them the following day. The capture of them reduced Lord Cornwallis almost to despair. Writing that same day to Sir Henry Clinton, he observes, "My situation now becomes very critical; we dare not show a gun to their old batteries, and I expect that their new ones will open to-morrow morning. . . The safety of the place is, therefore, so precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risk in endeavoring to save us." — a generous abnegation of self on the part of the beleaguered commander. Had the fleet and army sailed, as he had been given to expect, about the 5th of October, they might have arrived in time to save his lordship; but at the date of the above letter they were still lingering in port. Delay of naval succor was fatal to British operations in this war.

The second parallel was now nearly ready to open. Cornwallis dreaded the effect of its batteries on his almost dismantled works. To retard the danger as much as possible, he

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<sup>1</sup> Lafayette to Washington. Cor. of the Rev., iii. 426.

ordered an attack on two of the batteries that were in the greatest state of forwardness, their guns to be spiked. It was made a little before daybreak of the 16th, by about three hundred and fifty men, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Abercrombie. He divided his forces; a detachment of guards and a company of grenadiers attacked one battery, and a corps of light infantry the other.

The redoubts which covered the batteries were forced in gallant style, and several pieces of artillery hastily spiked. By this time the supporting troops from the trenches came up, and the enemy were obliged to retreat, leaving behind them seven or eight dead and six prisoners. The French who had guard of this part of the trenches, had four officers and twelve privates killed or wounded, and the Americans lost one sergeant. The mischief had been done too hastily. The spikes were easily extracted, and before evening all the batteries and the parallel were nearly complete.

At this time the garrison could not show a gun on the side of the works exposed to attack, and the shells were nearly expended; the place was no longer tenable. Rather than surrender, Cornwallis determined to attempt an escape. His plan was to leave his sick and wounded and his baggage behind, cross over in the night to Gloucester Point, attack Choisy's camp before daybreak, mount his infantry on the captured cavalry horses, and on such other as could be collected on the road, push for the upper country by rapid marches until opposite the fords of the great rivers, then turn suddenly northward, force his way through Maryland, Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and join Sir Henry Clinton in New York.

It was a wild and daring scheme, but his situation was desperate, and the idea of surrender intolerable.

In pursuance of this design, sixteen large boats were secretly prepared; a detachment was appointed to remain and capitulate for the town's people, the sick and the wounded; a large part of the troops were transported to the Gloucester side of the river before midnight, and the second division had actually embarked, when a violent storm of wind and rain scattered the boats, and drove them a considerable distance down the river. They were collected with difficulty. It was now too late to effect the passage of the second division before daybreak, and an effort was made to get back the division which had already crossed. It was not done until the morning was far advanced, and the troops in recrossing were exposed to the fire of the American batteries.



The hopes of Lord Cornwallis were now at an end. His works were tumbling in ruins about him, under an incessant cannonade ; his garrison was reduced in number by sickness and death, and exhausted by constant watching and severe duty. Unwilling to expose the residue of the brave troops which had stood by him so faithfully, to the dangers and horrors of an assault, which could not fail to be successful, he ordered a parley to be beaten about ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th, and despatched a flag with a letter to Washington proposing a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers might be appointed by each side to meet and settle terms for the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester.

Washington felt unwilling to grant such delay, when re-enforcements might be on the way for Cornwallis from New York. In reply, therefore, he requested that, previous to the meeting of commissioners, his lordship's proposals might be sent in writing to the American lines, for which purpose a suspension of hostilities during two hours from the delivery of the letter, would be granted. This was complied with ; but as the proposals offered by Cornwallis were not all admissible, Washington drew up a schedule of such terms as he would grant, and transmitted it to his lordship.

The armistice was prolonged. Commissioners met, the Viscount de Noailles and Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens on the part of the allies ; Colonel Dundas and Major Ross on the part of the British. After much discussion, a rough draft was made of the terms of capitulation to be submitted to the British general. These Washington caused to be promptly transcribed, and sent to Lord Cornwallis early in the morning of the 19th, with a note expressing his expectation that they would be signed by eleven o'clock, and that the garrison would be ready to march out by two o'clock in the afternoon. Lord Cornwallis was fain to comply, and, accordingly, on the same day, the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester were surrendered to General Washington as commander-in-chief of the combined army ; and the ships-of-war, transports and other vessels, to the Count de Grasse, as commander of the French fleet. The garrison of Yorktown and Gloucester, including the officers of the navy and seamen of every denomination, were to surrender as prisoners of war to the combined army ; the land force to remain prisoners to the United States, the seamen to the King of France.

The garrison was to be allowed the same honors granted to the garrison of Charleston when it surrendered to Sir Henry

Clinton. The officers were to retain their side arms ; both officers and soldiers their private property, and no part of their baggage or papers was to be subject to search or inspection. The soldiers were to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania, as much by regiments as possible, and supplied with the same rations of provisions as the American soldiers. The officers were to be permitted to proceed, upon parole, to Europe or to any maritime port on the continent of America in possession of British troops. The *Bonetta* sloop-of-war was to be at the disposal of Lord Cornwallis ; to convey an aide-de-camp, with despatches to Sir Henry Clinton, with such soldiers as he might think proper to send to New York, and was to sail without examination. (We will here observe that in this vessel, thus protected from scrutiny, a number of royalists, whose conduct had rendered them peculiarly odious to their countrymen, privately took their departure.)

It was arranged in the allied camp that General Lincoln should receive the submission of the royal army, precisely in the manner in which the submission of his own army had been received on the surrender of Charleston. An eye-witness has given us a graphic description of the ceremony.

“At about twelve o'clock the combined army was drawn up in two lines more than a mile in length, the Americans on the right side of the road, the French on the left. Washington, mounted on a noble steed, and attended by his staff, was in front of the former ; the Count de Rochambeau and his suite, of the latter. The French troops, in complete uniform, and well equipped, made a brilliant appearance, and had marched to the ground with a band of music playing, which was a novelty in the American service. The American troops, but part in uniform, and all in garments much the worse for wear, yet had a spirited, soldier-like air, and were not the worse in the eyes of their countrymen for bearing the marks of hard service and great privations. The concourse of spectators from the country seemed equal in number to the military, yet silence and order prevailed.

NOTE. — The number of prisoners made by the above capitulation amounted to 7,073, of whom 5,950 were rank and file ; six commissioned, and twenty-eight non-commissioned officers and privates, had previously been captured in the two redoubts, or in the sortie of the garrison. The loss sustained by the garrison during the siege, in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to 552. That of the combined army in killed was about 300. The combined army to which Cornwallis surrendered, was estimated at 16,000, of whom 7,000 were French, 5,500 Continentals, and 3,500 militia. — *Holmes' Annals*, vol. ii. p. 333.

"About two o'clock the garrison sallied forth, and passed through with shouldered arms, slow and solemn steps, colors cased, and drums beating a British march. They were all well clad, having been furnished with new suits prior to the capitulation. They were led by General O'Hara on horseback, who, riding up to General Washington, took off his hat and apologized for the non-appearance of Lord Cornwallis, on account of indisposition. Washington received him with dignified courtesy, but pointed to Major-General Lincoln as the officer who was to receive the submission of the garrison. By him they were conducted into a field where they were to ground their arms. In passing through the line formed by the allied army, their march was careless and irregular, and their aspect sullen, the order to "ground arms" was given by their platoon officers with a tone of deep chagrin, and many of the soldiers threw down their muskets with a violence sufficient to break them. This irregularity was checked by General Lincoln; yet it was excusable in brave men in their unfortunate predicament. This ceremony over, they were conducted back to Yorktown, to remain under guard until removed to their places of destination."<sup>1</sup>

On the following morning, Washington in general orders congratulated the allied armies on the recent victory, awarding high praise to the officers and troops both French and American, for their conduct during the siege, and specifying by name several of the generals and other officers who had especially distinguished themselves. All those of his army who were under arrest, were pardoned and set at liberty. "Divine service," it was added, "is to be performed to-morrow in the several brigades and divisions. The commander-in-chief earnestly recommends that the troops, not on duty, should universally attend, with that seriousness of deportment and gratitude of heart which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demand of us."

Cornwallis felt deeply the humiliation of this close to all his wide and wild campaigning, and was made the more sensitive on the subject by circumstances of which he soon became apprised. On the very day that he had been compelled to lay down his arms before Yorktown, the lingering armament intended for his relief sailed from New York. It consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, two fifty-gun ships, and eight frigates; with Sir Henry Clinton and seven thousand of his

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<sup>1</sup> Thacher, p. 346.

best troops. Sir Henry arrived off the Capes of Virginia on the 24th, and gathered information which led him to apprehend that Lord Cornwallis had capitulated. He hovered off the mouth of the Chesapeake until the 29th, when, having fully ascertained that he had come too late, he turned his tardy prow toward New York.

Cornwallis, in a letter written subsequently, renders the following testimony to the conduct of his captors: "The treatment, in general, that we have received from the enemy since our surrender, has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness and attention that has been shown to us by the French officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offer of money, both public and private, to any amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression in the breast of every officer, whenever the fortune of war shall put any of them into our power."

In the mean time, the rejoicings which Washington had commenced with appropriate solemnities in the victorious camp, had spread throughout the Union. "Cornwallis is taken!" was the universal acclaim. It was considered a death-blow to the war.

Congress gave way to transports of joy. Thanks were voted to the commander-in-chief, to the Counts de Rochambeau and De Grasse, to the officers of the allied armies generally, and to the corps of artillery and engineers especially. Two stands of colors, trophies of the capitulation, were voted to Washington, two pieces of field ordnance to De Rochambeau and De Grasse; and it was decreed that a marble column, commemorative of the alliance between France and the United States, and of the victory achieved by their associated arms, should be erected in Yorktown. Finally, Congress issued a proclamation, appointing a day for general thanksgiving and prayer, in acknowledgment of this signal interposition of Divine Providence.

Far different was the feeling of the British ministry when news of the event reached the other side of the Atlantic. Lord George Germain was the first to announce it to Lord North at his office in Downing Street. "And how did he take it?" was the inquiry. "As he would have taken a ball in the breast," replied Lord George, "for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly as he paced up and down the apartment, 'Oh God! it is all over.'"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wrexall's Historical Memoirs, vol. II. p. 99.

## CHAPTER IV.

DISSOLUTION OF THE COMBINED ARMIES — WASHINGTON AT ELTHAM — DEATH OF JOHN PARKE CUSTIS — WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON — CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT THE NEXT CAMPAIGN — LAFAYETTE SAILS FOR FRANCE — WASHINGTON STIMULATES CONGRESS TO MILITARY PREPARATIONS — PROJECT TO SURPRISE AND CARRY OFF PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY FROM NEW YORK — THE CASE OF CAPTAIN ASGILL.

WASHINGTON would have followed up the reduction of Yorktown by a combined operation against Charleston, and addressed a letter to the Count de Grasse on the subject, but the count alleged in reply that the orders of his court, ulterior projects, and his engagements with the Spaniards, rendered it impossible to remain the necessary time for the operation.

The prosecution of the Southern war, therefore, upon the broad scale which Washington had contemplated, had to be relinquished; for, without shipping and a convoy, the troops and every thing necessary for a siege would have to be transported by land with immense trouble, expense and delay; while the enemy, by means of their fleet, could re-enforce or withdraw the garrison at pleasure.

Under these circumstances, Washington had to content himself, for the present, with detaching two thousand Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia Continental troops, under General St. Clair, for the support of General Greene, trusting that, with this aid, he would be able to command the interior of South Carolina, and confine the enemy to the town of Charleston.

A dissolution of the combined forces now took place. The Marquis St. Simon embarked his troops on the last of October, and the Count de Grasse made sail on the 4th of November, taking with him two beautiful horses which Washington had presented to him in token of cordial regard.

Lafayette, seeing there was no probability of further active service in the present year, resolved to return to France on a visit to his family, and, with Washington's approbation, set out for Philadelphia to obtain leave of absence from Congress.

The British prisoners were marched to Winchester in Virginia, and Frederickstown in Maryland, and Lord Cornwallis and his principal officers sailed for New York on parole.

The main part of the American army embarked for the

Head of Elk, and returned northward under the command of General Lincoln, to be cantoned for the winter in the Jerseys and on the Hudson, so as to be ready for operations against New York, or elsewhere, in the next year's campaign.

The French army were to remain for the winter in Virginia, and the Count de Rochambeau established his head-quarters at Williamsburg.

Having attended in person to the distribution of ordnance and stores, the departure of prisoners, and the embarkation of the troops under Lincoln, Washington left Yorktown on the 5th of November, and arrived the same day at Eltham, the seat of his friend Colonel Bassett. He arrived just in time to receive the last breath of John Parke Custis, the son of Mrs. Washington, as he had, several years previously, rendered tender and pious offices at the death-bed of his sister, Miss Custis. The deceased had been an object of Washington's care from childhood, and been cherished by him with paternal affection. Formed under his guidance and instructions, he had been fitted to take a part in the public concerns of his country, and had acquitted himself with credit as a member of the Virginia Legislature. He was but twenty-eight years old at the time of his death, and left a widow and four young children. It was an unexpected event, and the dying scene was rendered peculiarly affecting from the presence of the mother and wife of the deceased. Washington remained several days at Eltham to comfort them in their afflictions. As a consolation to Mrs. Washington in her bereavement, he adopted the two youngest children of the deceased, a boy and girl, who thenceforth formed a part of his immediate family.

From Eltham, Washington proceeded to Mount Vernon ; but public cares gave him little leisure to attend to his private concerns. We have seen how repeatedly his steady mind had been exercised in the darkest times of the revolutionary struggle, in buoying up the public heart when sinking into despondency. He had now an opposite task to perform, to guard against an overweening confidence inspired by the recent triumph. In a letter to General Greene, he writes : " I shall remain but a few days here, and shall proceed to Philadelphia, when I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that Congress, viewing this stroke in too important a point of light, may think our work too nearly closed, and will fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent

this error, I shall employ every means in my power, and if, unhappily, we sink into that fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

In a letter written at the same time to Lafayette, who, having obtained from Congress an indefinite leave of absence, was about to sail, he says: "I owe it to your friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear marquis, not to let you leave this country, without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you, and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct, and other important services in the course of the last campaign." In reply to inquiries which the marquis had made respecting the operations of the coming year, he declares that every thing must depend absolutely for success upon the naval force to be employed in these seas and the time of its appearance. "No land force," writes he, "can act decisively unless it is accompanied by a maritime superiority; nor can more than negative advantages be expected without it. For proof of this we have only to recur to the instances of the ease and facility with which the British shifted their ground, as advantages were to be obtained at either extremity of the continent, and to their late heavy loss the moment they failed in their naval superiority. . . . A doubt did not exist, nor does it at this moment, in any man's mind, of the total extirpation of the British force in the Carolinas and Georgia, if the Count de Grasse could have extended his co-operation two months longer."

We may add here that Congress, after resolutions highly complimentary to the marquis, had, through the secretary of foreign affairs, recommended to the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States, resident in Europe, to confer with the marquis, and avail themselves of his information relative to the situation of national affairs, which information the various heads of departments were instructed to furnish him; and he was furthermore made the hearer of a letter to his sovereign, recommending him in the strongest terms to the royal consideration. Much was anticipated from the generous zeal of Lafayette, and the influence he would be able to exercise in France in favor of the American cause.

Towards the end of November, Washington was in Philadelphia, where Congress received him with distinguished honors. He lost no time in enforcing the policy respecting the ensuing campaign, which he had set forth in his letters to General Greene and the marquis. His views were met by the military committee of Congress, with which he was in frequent con-

sultation, and by the secretaries of war, finance, and public affairs, who attended their conferences. Under his impulse and personal supervision, the military arrangements for 1782 were made with unusual despatch. On the 10th of December resolutions were passed in Congress for requisitions of men and money from the several States; and Washington backed these requisitions by letters to the respective governors, urging prompt compliance. Strenuous exertions, too, were made by Dr. Franklin, then minister in France, to secure a continuance of efficient aid from that power; and a loan of six millions had been promised by the king after hearing of the capitulation of Yorktown.

The persuasion that peace was at hand was, however, too prevalent for the public to be roused to new sacrifices and toils to maintain what was considered the mere shadow of a war. The States were slow in furnishing a small part of their respective quotas of troops, and still slower in answering to the requisitions for money.

After remaining four months in Philadelphia, Washington set out in March to join the army at Newburg on the Hudson. He was at Morristown in the Jerseys on the 28th, when a bold project was submitted to him by Colonel Matthias Ogden, of the Jersey line. Prince William Henry,<sup>1</sup> son of the king of England, who was serving as a midshipman in the fleet of Admiral Digby, was at that time in New York with the admiral, an object of great attention to the army, and the tory part of the inhabitants. The object of Colonel Ogden was to surprise the prince and the admiral at their quarters in the city, and bring them off prisoners. He was to be aided in the enterprise by a captain, a subaltern, three sergeants, and thirty-six men. They were to embark from the Jersey shore on a rainy night in four whale-boats, well manned, and rowed with muffled oars, and were to land in New York at half-past nine, at a wharf not far from the quarters of the prince and admiral, which were in Hanover Square. Part of the men were to guard the boats, while Colonel Ogden with a strong party was to proceed to the house, force the doors if necessary, and capture the prince and admiral. In returning to the boats, part of the men, armed with guns and bayonets, were to precede the prisoners, and part to follow at half a gunshot distance, to give front to the enemy until all were embarked.

The plan was approved by Washington, but Colonel Ogden

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards William IV.



was charged to be careful that no insult or indignity be offered to the prince or admiral, should they be captured. They were, on the contrary, to be treated with all possible respect, and conveyed without delay to Congress.

How far an attempt was made to carry this plan into operation, is not known. An exaggerated alarm seems to have been awakened by extravagant reports circulated in New York, as appears by the following citation from a paper or letter dated April 23, and transmitted by Washington to Ogden :

“Great seem to be their apprehensions here. About a fortnight ago a number of flat-boats were discovered by a sentinel from the bank of the river (Hudson), which are said to have been intended to fire the suburbs, and in the height of the conflagration to make a descent on the lower part of the city, and wrest from our embraces his Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, Prince William Henry, and several other illustrious personages — since which, great precautions have been taken for the security of those gentlemen, by augmenting the guards, and to render their persons as little exposed as possible.”

These precautions very probably disconcerted the project of Colonel Ogden, of which we find no other traces.

In a recent letter to General Greene, Washington had expressed himself strongly on the subject of retaliation. “Of all laws it is the most difficult to execute, where you have not the transgressor himself in your possession. Humanity will ever interfere, and plead strongly against the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilt of another.”

It was but three or four months after this writing, that his judgment and feelings were put to the proof in this respect. We have had occasion to notice the marauds of the New York refugees in the Jerseys. One of their number by the name of Philip White had been captured by the Jersey people, and killed in attempting to escape from those who were conducting him to Monmouth jail. His partisans in New York determined on a signal revenge. Captain Joseph Huddy, an ardent whig, who had been captured when bravely defending a block-house in Monmouth County, and carried captive to New York, was now drawn forth from prison, conducted into the Jerseys by a party of refugees, headed by a Captain Lippencott, and hanged on the heights of Middletown with a label affixed to his breast, bearing the inscription, “Up goes Huddy for Philip White.”

The neighboring country cried out for retaliation. Washington submitted the matter, with all the evidence furnished,

to a board of general and field officers. It was unanimously determined that the offender should be demanded for execution, and, if not given up, that retaliation should be exercised on a British prisoner of equal rank. Washington accordingly sent proofs to Sir Henry Clinton of what he stigmatized as a murder, and demanded that Captain Lippencott, or the officer who commanded the execution of Captain Huddy, should be given up; or if that officer should be inferior in rank, so many of the perpetrators as would, according to the tariff of exchange, be an equivalent. "To do this," said he, "will mark the justice of your Excellency's character. In failure of it, I shall hold myself justifiable in the eyes of God and man, for the measure to which I will resort."

Sir Henry declined a compliance, but stated that he had ordered a strict inquiry into the circumstances of Captain Huddy's death, and would bring the perpetrators of it to immediate trial.

Washington about the same time received the copy of a resolution of Congress approving of his firm and judicious conduct, in his application to the British general at New York, and promising to support him "in his fixed purpose of exemplary retaliation."

He accordingly ordered a selection to be made by lot, for the above purpose, from among the British officers, prisoners at Lancaster in Pennsylvania. To enhance the painful nature of the case, the lot fell upon Captain Charles Asgill, of the guards, a youth only nineteen years of age, of an amiable character and high hopes and expectations, being only son and heir of Sir Charles Asgill, a wealthy baronet.

The youth bore his lot with firmness, but his fellow-prisoners were incensed at Sir Henry Clinton for exposing him to such a fate by refusing to deliver up the culprit. One of their number, a son of the Earl of Ludlow, solicited permission from Washington to proceed to New York and lay the case before Sir Guy Carleton, who had succeeded in command to Sir Henry Clinton. In granting it, Washington intimated that, though deeply affected by the unhappy fate to which Captain Asgill was subjected, and devoutly wishing that his life might be spared, there was but one alternative that could save him, of which the British commander must be aware.

The matter remained for some time in suspense. Washington had ordered that Captain Asgill should be treated "with every attention and politeness (consistent with his present situation), which his rank, fortune and connections, together with

his unfortunate state, demanded," and the captain himself acknowledged in writing the feeling and attentive manner in which those commands were executed. But on the question of retaliation Washington remained firm.

Lippencott was at length tried by a court-martial, but, after a long sitting, acquitted, it appearing that he had acted under the verbal orders of Governor Franklin, president of the board of associated loyalists. The British commander reprobated the death of Captain Huddy, and broke up the board.

These circumstances changed in some degree the ground upon which Washington was proceeding. He laid the whole matter before Congress, admitted Captain Asgill on parole at Morristown, and subsequently intimated to the secretary of war his private opinion in favor of his release, with permission to go to his friends in Europe.

In the meantime Lady Asgill, the mother of the youth, had written a pathetic letter to the Count de Vergennes, the French minister of state, imploring his intercession in behalf of her son. The letter was shown to the king and queen, and by their direction the count wrote to Washington soliciting the liberation of Asgill. Washington, as has been shown, had already suggested his release, and was annoyed at the delay of Congress in the matter. He now referred to that body the communication from the count, and urged a favorable decision. To his great relief, he received their directions to set Captain Asgill at liberty.

This, like the case of the unfortunate André, was one of the painful and trying predicaments in which a strict sense of public duty obliged Washington to do violence to his natural impulses, and he declares in one of his letters, that the situation of Captain Asgill often filled him with the keenest anguish. "I felt for him on many accounts; and not the least when, viewing him as a man of honor and sentiment, I considered how unfortunate it was for him that a wretch who possessed neither, should be the means of causing him a single pang or a disagreeable sensation."

NOTE. — While these pages are going through the press, we have before us an instance of that conscientious regard for justice which governed Washington's conduct.

A favorite aide-de-camp, Colonel Samuel B. Webb, who had been wounded in the battles of Bunker's Hill and White Plains, was captured in December, 1777, when commanding a Connecticut regiment, and accompanying General Parsons in a descent upon Long Island. He was then but 24 years of age, and the youngest colonel in the army. Presuming upon the favor of General Washington, who had pronounced him one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the service, he wrote to him, reporting his capture, and

begging most strenuously for an immediate exchange. He received a prompt, but disappointing reply. Washington lamented his unfortunate condition. "It would give me pleasure," said he, "to render you any services in my power, but it is impossible for me to comply with your request, without violating the principles of justice, and incurring a charge of partiality."

In fact, several officers of Colonel Webb's rank had been a long time in durance, and it was a rule with Washington that those first captured should be first released. To this rule he inflexibly adhered, however his feelings might plead for its infringement. Colonel Webb, in consequence, was not exchanged until the present year; when Washington, still on principles of justice, gave him the brevet rank of Brigadier-General and the command of the light infantry.

## CHAPTER V.

WASHINGTON CONTINUES HIS PRECAUTIONS — SIR GUY CARLETON BRINGS PACIFIC NEWS — DISCONTENTS OF THE ARMY — EXTRAORDINARY LETTER FROM COLONEL NICOLA — INDIGNANT REPLY OF WASHINGTON — JOINT LETTERS OF SIR GUY CARLETON AND ADMIRAL DIGBY — JUNCTION OF THE ALLIED ARMIES ON THE HUDSON — CONTEMPLATED REDUCTION OF THE ARMY.

IN disposing of the case of Captain Asgill, we have anticipated dates, and must revert to the time when Washington again established his head-quarters at Newburg on the Hudson. The solicitude felt by him on account of the universal relaxation of the sinews of war, was not allayed by reports of pacific speeches, and motions made in the British parliament, which might be delusive. "Even if the nation and parliament," said he, "are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will, undoubtedly, be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection, and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands; and instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigor, that we may take the advantage of every favorable opportunity, until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation ever yet suffered in treaty by preparing, even in the moment of negotiation, most vigorously for the field."

Sir Guy Carleton arrived in New York early in May to take the place of Sir Henry Clinton, who had solicited his recall. In a letter dated May 7, Sir Guy informed Washington of his being joined with Admiral Digby in the commission of peace; he transmitted at the same time printed copies of the proceedings in the House of Commons on the 4th of March respecting an address to the king in favor of peace; and of a bill reported

in consequence thereof, authorizing the king to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted provinces of North America. As this bill, however, had not passed into a law when Sir Guy left England, it presented no basis for a negotiation; and was only cited by him to show the pacific disposition of the British nation, with which he professed the most zealous concurrence. Still, though multiplied circumstances gradually persuaded Washington of a real disposition on the part of Great Britain to terminate the war, he did not think fit to relax his preparations for hostilities.

Great discontents prevailed at this time in the army, both among officers and men. The neglect of the States to furnish their proportions of the sum voted by Congress for the prosecution of the war, had left the army almost destitute. There was scarce money sufficient to feed the troops from day to day; indeed, there were days when they were absolutely in want of provisions. The pay of the officers, too, was greatly in arrear; many of them doubted whether they would ever receive the half-pay decreed to them by Congress for a term of years after the conclusion of the war, and fears began to be expressed that, in the event of peace, they would all be disbanded with their claims unliquidated, and themselves cast upon the community penniless, and unfitted, by long military habitudes, for the gainful pursuits of peace.

At this juncture, Washington received an extraordinary letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, a veteran officer, once commandant of Fort Mifflin, who had been in habits of intimacy with him, and had warily interceded in behalf of the suffering army. In this letter he attributed all the ills experienced and anticipated by the army and the public at large, to the existing form of government. He condemned a republican form as incompatible with national prosperity, and advised a mixed government like that of England; which, he had no doubt, on its benefits being properly pointed out, would be readily adopted. "In that case," he adds, "it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities which have led us through difficulties apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory; those qualities that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace. Some people have so connected the idea of tyranny and monarchy, as to find it very difficult to separate them. It may, therefore, be requisite to give the head of such a constitution as I propose, some title apparently more moderate;

but, if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of KING, which, I conceive, would be attended with some material advantages."

Washington saw at once that Nicola was but the organ of a military faction, disposed to make the army the basis of an energetic government, and to place him at the head. The suggestion, backed by the opportunity, might have tempted a man of meaner ambition: from him it drew the following indignant letter:

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence, and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature."

On the 2d of August, Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote a joint letter to Washington, informing him that they were acquainted, by authority, that negotiations for a general peace had already been commenced at Paris, and that the independence of the United States would be proposed in the first instance by the British commissioner, instead of being made a condition of a general treaty.

Even yet, Washington was wary. "From the former infatuation, duplicity, and perverse system of British policy," said he, "I confess I am induced to doubt every thing; to suspect

every thing." . . . Whatever the real intention of the enemy may be, I think the strictest attention and exertion, which have ever been exercised on our part, instead of being diminished, ought to be increased. Jealousy and precaution at least can do no harm. Too much confidence and supineness may be pernicious in the extreme."

What gave force to this policy was, that as yet no offers had been made on the part of Great Britain, for a general cessation of hostilities, and, although the British commanders were in a manner tied down by the resolves of the House of Commons, to a defensive war only in the United States, they might be at liberty to transport part of their force to the West Indies, to act against the French possessions in that quarter. With these considerations he wrote to the Count de Rochambeau, then at Baltimore, advising him, for the good of the common cause, to march his troops to the banks of the Hudson, and form a junction with the American army.

The junction took place about the middle of September. The French army crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point, where the American forces were paraded under arms to welcome them. The clothing and arms recently received from France or captured at Yorktown, enabled them to make an unusually respectable appearance. Two lines were formed from the landing-place to head-quarters, between which Count Rochambeau passed, escorted by a troop of cavalry; after which he took his station beside General Washington: the music struck up a French march, and the whole army passed in review before them.

The French army encamped on the left of the American, near Crompond, about ten miles from Verplanck's Point. The greatest good-will continued to prevail between the allied forces, though the Americans had but little means of showing hospitality to their gay Gallic friends. "Only conceive the mortification they must suffer, even the general officers," says Washington in a letter to the secretary of war, "when they cannot invite a French officer, a visiting friend, or a travelling acquaintance, to a better repast than whiskey hot from the still, and not always that, and a bit of beef without vegetables will afford them."

Speaking of a contemplated reduction of the army to take place on the 1st of January: "While I premise," said he, "that no one I have seen or heard of appears opposed to the principle of reducing the army as circumstances may require; yet I cannot help fearing the result of the measure in contem-

plation, under present circumstances, when I see such a number of men, goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation on the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury, and what they call the ingratitude of the public, involved in debts, without one farthing of money to carry them home, and after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and suffered every thing that human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death:—I repeat it, that when I consider the irritating circumstances, without one thing to soothe their feelings or dispel the gloomy prospects, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and distressing nature. . . .

“I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the reality would justify me in doing it. I could give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long-suffering of this army are almost exhausted, and that there never was so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. While in the field, I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when we retire into winter quarters, unless the storm is previously dissipated, I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace.”

## CHAPTER VI.

DISCONTENTS OF THE ARMY AT NEWBURG — MEMORIAL OF THE OFFICERS TO CONGRESS — ANONYMOUS PAPERS CIRCULATED IN THE CAMP — MEETING OF OFFICERS CALLED — ADDRESS OF WASHINGTON — RESOLUTIONS IN CONSEQUENCE — LETTERS OF WASHINGTON TO THE PRESIDENT — HIS OPINION OF THE ANONYMOUS ADDRESSES AND THEIR AUTHOR.

THE anxious fears of Washington in regard to what might take place on the approaching reduction of the army, were in some degree realized. After the meeting with the French army at Verplanck's Point, he had drawn up his forces to his former encampment at Newburg, where he established his head-quarters for the winter. In the leisure and idleness of a winter camp, the discontents of the army had time to ferment. The



arrearages of pay became a topic of constant and angry comment, as well as the question, whether the resolution of Congress, granting half pay to officers who should serve to the end of the war, would be carried into effect. Whence were the funds to arise for such half pay? The national treasury was empty; the States were slow to tax themselves; the resource of foreign loans was nearly exhausted. The articles of confederation required the concurrence of nine States to any act appropriating public money. There had never been nine States in favor of the half-pay establishment; was it probable that as many would concur in applying any scanty funds that might accrue, and which would be imperiously demanded for many other purposes, to the payment of claims known to be unpopular, and to the support of men, who, the necessity for their services being at an end, might be regarded as drones in the community?

The result of those boding conferences was a memorial to Congress in December, from the officers in camp, on behalf of the army, representing the hardships of the case, and proposing that a specific sum should be granted them for the money actually due, and as a commutation for half pay. Three officers were deputed to present the memorial to Congress, and watch over and promote its success.

The memorial gave rise to animated and long discussions in Congress. Some members were for admitting the claims as founded on engagements entered into by the nation; others were for referring them to the respective States of the claimants. The winter passed away without any definite measures on the subject.

On the 10th of March, 1783, an anonymous paper was circulated through the camp, calling a meeting at eleven o'clock the next day, of the general and field officers, of an officer from each company, and a delegate from the medical staff, to consider a letter just received from their representatives in Philadelphia, and what measures, if any, should be adopted to obtain that redress of grievances which they seemed to have solicited in vain.

On the following morning an anonymous address to the officers of the army was privately put into circulation. It professed to be from a fellow-soldier, who had shared in their toils and mingled in their dangers, and who till very lately had believed in the justice of his country.

"After a pursuit of seven long years," observed he, "the object for which we set out is at length brought within our

reach. Yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once; it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and bloody war; it has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns to bless — whom? a country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? a country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude and smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distress? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress — wants and wishes, which gratitude and policy should have anticipated, rather than evaded? And have you not lately, in the meek language of entreated memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favor? How have you been answered? Let the letter, which you are called to consider to-morrow, make reply.

“If this, then, be your treatment, while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division; when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this Revolution, and, retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor? If you can, go and carry with you the jest of tories, and the scorn of whigs; the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world! Go, starve and be forgotten! But if your spirits should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirits sufficient to oppose tyranny, under whatever garb it may assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have yet learned to discriminate between a people and cause, between men and principles; awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves! If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

“I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If

your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeals from the justice to the fears of government. Change the milk-and-water style of your last memorial. Assume a bolder tone, decent, but lively, spirited and determined; and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men, who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your *last remonstrance*, for I would no longer give it the suing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of *memorial*. Let it represent in language that will neither dishonor you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed; how long and how patiently you have suffered; how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them, that, though you were the first, and would wish to be the last, to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonor, it may drive you from the field; that the wound, often irritated and never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Congress now, must operate like the grave, and part you forever; that, in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death; if war, that courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and ‘mock when their fear cometh on.’ But let it represent, also, that should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy and them more respectable; that while war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field; and when it came to an end, you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause; an army victorious over its enemy, victorious over itself.”

This bold and eloquent, but dangerous appeal, founded as it was upon the wrongs and sufferings of a gallant army and the shameful want of sympathy in tardy legislators, called for the full exercise of Washington’s characteristic firmness, caution and discrimination. In general orders he noticed the anonymous paper, but expressed his confidence that the good sense of officers would prevent them from paying attention to such an irregular invitation; which he reprobated as disorderly. With a view to counteract its effects, he requested a like meeting of officers on the 15th instant. to hear the report of the committee deputed to Congress. “After mature deliberation,” added he, “they will devise what further measures ought to be adopted as

most rational and best calculated to obtain the just and important object in view."

On the following day another anonymous address was circulated, written in a more moderate tone, but to the same purport with the first, and affecting to construe the general orders into an approbation of the object sought; only changing the day appointed for the meeting. "Till now," it observed, "the commander-in-chief has regarded the steps you have taken for redress with good wishes alone; his ostensible silence has authorized your meetings, and his private opinion sanctified your claims. Had he disliked the object in view, would not the same sense of duty which forbade you from meeting on the third day of the week, have forbidden you from meeting on the seventh? Is not the same subject held up to your view? and has it not passed the seal of office, and taken all the solemnity of an order? This will give system to your proceedings, and stability to your resolves." Etc., etc.

On Saturday, the 15th of March, the meeting took place. Washington had previously sent for the officers, one by one, in private, and enlarged on the loss of character to the whole army, that would result from intemperate resolutions. At the meeting General Gates was called to the chair. Washington rose and apologized for appearing there, which he had not intended to do when he issued the order directing the assemblage. The diligence, however, which had been used in circulating anonymous writings, rendered it necessary he should give his sentiments to the army, on the nature and tendency of them. He had taken this opportunity to do so, and had committed his thoughts to writing, which, with the indulgence of his brother officers, he would take the liberty of reading to them.

He then proceeded to read a forcible and feeling address, pointing out the irregularity and impropriety of the recent anonymous summons, and the dangerous nature of the anonymous address; a production, as he observed, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judgment; drawn with great art, calculated to impress the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and to rouse all those resentments which must unavoidably flow from such a belief.

On these principles he had opposed the irregular and hasty meeting appointed in the anonymous summons, not from a disinclination to afford officers every opportunity, consistent with their own honor and the dignity of the army, to make known their grievances. "If any conduct heretofore," said he, "has not

evinced to you that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was among the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distresses, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be supposed at this last stage of the war that I am indifferent to its interests." . . .

"For myself," observes he, in another part of his address, "a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honor to command, will oblige me to declare in this public and solemn manner, that for the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country and those powers we are bound to respect, you may fully command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

"While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favor, let me entreat you, gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained; — let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country; and who wickedly attempts to open the flood-gates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood.

By thus determining and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice; you will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind; — ‘Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.’”

After he had concluded the address, he observed, that as a corroborating testimony of the good disposition in Congress towards the army, he would communicate to them a letter received from a worthy member of that body, who on all occasions had approved himself their fast friend. He produced an able letter from the Hon. Joseph Jones, which, while it pointed out the difficulties and embarrassments of Congress, held up very forcibly the idea that the army would, at all events, be generously dealt with.

Major Shaw, who was present, and from whose memoir we note this scene, relates that Washington, after reading the first paragraph of the letter, made a short pause, took out his spectacles, and begged the indulgence of his audience while he put them on, observing at the same time that *he had grown gray in their service, and now found himself growing blind*. “There was something,” adds Shaw, “so natural, so unaffected in this appeal, as rendered it superior to the most studied oratory; it forced its way to the heart, and you might see sensibility moisten every eye.”

“Happy for America,” continues Major Shaw, “that she has a patriot army, and equally so that Washington is its leader. I rejoice in the opportunity I have had of seeing this great man in a variety of situations; — calm and intrepid when the battle raged; patient and persevering under the pressure of misfortune; moderate and possessing himself in the full career of victory. Great as these qualifications deservedly render him, he never appeared to me more truly so than at the assembly we have been speaking of. On other occasions he has been supported by the exertions of an army and the countenance of his friends; but on this he stood single and alone. There was no saying where the passions of an army which were not a little inflamed, might lead; but it was generally allowed that further forbearance was dangerous, and moderation had ceased to be a

virtue. Under these circumstances he appeared, not at the head of his troops, but, as it were, in opposition to them; and for a dreadful moment the interests of the army and its general seemed to be in competition! He spoke,—every doubt was dispelled, and the tide of patriotism rolled again in its wonted course. Illustrious man! What he says of the army may with equal justice be applied to his own character:—‘Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.’”<sup>1</sup>

The moment Washington retired from the assemblage, a resolution was moved by the warm-hearted Knox, seconded by General Putnam, and passed unanimously, assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable. Then followed resolutions, declaring that no circumstances of distress or danger should induce a conduct calculated to sully the reputation and glory acquired at the price of their blood and eight years’ faithful services; that they continued to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country; and that the commander-in-chief should be requested to write to the President of Congress, earnestly entreating a speedy decision on the late address forwarded by a committee of the army.

A letter was accordingly written by Washington, breathing that generous, yet well-tempered spirit, with which he ever pleaded the cause of the army.

“The result of the proceedings of the grand convention of officers,” said he, “which I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of patriotism which could have been given by men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army, and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude of their country.

“Having seen the proceedings on the part of the army terminate with perfect unanimity, and in a manner entirely consonant to my wishes; being impressed with the liveliest sentiments of affection for those who have so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully suffered and fought under my immediate direction; having, from motives of justice, duty and gratitude, spontaneously offered myself as an advocate for their rights; and having been requested to write to your Excellency, ear-

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<sup>1</sup> Quincy’s *Memoir of Major Shaw*, p. 104.

nestly entreating the most speedy decision of Congress upon the subjects of the late address from the army to that honorable body ; it only remains for me to perform the task I have assumed, and to intercede on their behalf, as I now do, that the sovereign power will be pleased to verify the predictions I have pronounced, and the confidence the army have reposed in the justice of their country."

After referring to former representations made by him to Congress, on the subject of a half pay to be granted to officers for life, he adds: " If, besides the simple payment of their wages, a further compensation is not due to the sufferings and sacrifices of the officers, then have I been mistaken indeed. If the whole army have not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, then have I been beguiled by prejudice and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country should not, in the event, perform every thing which has been requested in the late memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited, void of foundation. And if, as has been suggested for the purpose of inflaming their passions, ' the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers by the Revolution ; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt ; if they are to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor ; ' then shall I have learnt what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale which will imbitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions. A country, rescued by their arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude."

This letter to the President was accompanied by other letters to members of Congress ; all making similar direct and eloquent appeals. The subject was again taken up in Congress, nine States concurred in a resolution commuting the half pay into a sum equal to five years' whole pay ; and the whole matter, at one moment so fraught with danger to the republic, through the temperate wisdom of Washington, was happily adjusted.

The anonymous addresses to the army, which were considered at the time so insidious and inflammatory, and which certainly were ill-judged and dangerous, have since been avowed by General John Armstrong, a man who has sustained with great credit to himself various eminent posts under our government. At the time of writing them he was a young



man, aide-de-camp to General Gates, and he did it at the request of a number of his fellow-officers, indignant at the neglect of their just claims by Congress, and in the belief that the tardy movements of that body required the spur and the lash. Washington, in a letter dated 23d January, 1797, says, "I have since had sufficient reason for believing that the object of the author was just, honorable, and friendly to the country, though the means suggested by him were certainly liable to much misunderstanding and abuse."

## CHAPTER VII.

NEWS OF PEACE — LETTER OF WASHINGTON IN BEHALF OF THE ARMY — CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES PROCLAIMED — ORDER OF THE CINCINNATI FORMED — LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO THE STATE GOVERNORS — MUTINY IN THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE — LETTER OF WASHINGTON ON THE SUBJECT — TOUR TO THE NORTHERN POSTS.

At length arrived the wished-for news of peace. A general treaty had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January. An armed vessel, the *Triumph*, belonging to the Count d'Estaing's squadron, arrived at Philadelphia from Cadiz, on the 23d of March, bringing a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, to the President of Congress, communicating the intelligence. In a few days Sir Guy Carleton informed Washington by letter, that he was ordered to proclaim a cessation of hostilities by sea and land.

A similar proclamation issued by Congress, was received by Washington on the 17th of April. Being unaccompanied by any instructions respecting the discharge of the part of the army with him, should the measure be deemed necessary, he found himself in a perplexing situation.

The accounts of peace received at different times, had raised an expectation in the minds of those of his troops that had engaged "for the war," that a speedy discharge must be the consequence of the proclamation. Most of them could not distinguish between a proclamation of a cessation of hostilities and a definitive declaration of peace, and might consider any further claim on their military services an act of injustice. It was becoming difficult to enforce the discipline necessary to the coherence of an army. Washington represented these circumstances

in a letter to the President, and earnestly entreated a prompt determination on the part of Congress, as to what was to be the period of the services of these men, and how he was to act respecting their discharge.

One suggestion of his letter is expressive of his strong sympathy with the patriot soldier, and his knowledge of what formed a matter of pride with the poor fellows who had served and suffered under him. He urged that, in discharging those who had been engaged "for the war," the non-commissioned officers and soldiers should be allowed to take with them, as their own property, and as a gratuity, their arms and accoutrements. "This act," observes he, "would raise pleasing sensations in the minds of these worthy and faithful men, who, from their early engaging in the war at moderate bounties, and from their patient continuance under innumerable distresses, have not only deserved nobly of their country, but have obtained an honorable distinction over those, who, with shorter terms, have gained large pecuniary rewards. This, at a comparatively small expense, would be deemed an honorable testimonial from Congress of the regard they bear to these distinguished worthies, and the sense they have of their suffering virtues and services. . . .

"These constant companions of their toils, preserved with sacred attention, would be handed down from the present possessors to their children, as honorary badges of bravery and military merit; and would probably be brought forth on some future occasion, with pride and exultation, to be improved with the same military ardor and emulation in the hands of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present establishment and foundation of our national independence and glory."

This letter despatched, he notified in general orders that the cessation of hostilities should be proclaimed at noon on the following day, and read in the evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army, "after which," adds he, "the chaplains with the several brigades will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations."

Having noticed that this auspicious day, the 19th of April, completed the eighth year of the war, and was the anniversary of the eventful conflict at Lexington, he went on in general orders, to impress upon the army a proper idea of the dignified part they were called upon to act.

"The generous task for which we first flew to arms being

accomplished ; the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged, and firmly secured, and the characters of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering, and danger, being immortalized by the illustrious appellation of *the patriot army*, nothing now remains, but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect, unvarying consistency of character, through the very last act, to close the drama with applause, and to retire from the military theatre with the same approbation of angels and men which has crowned all their former virtuous actions."

The letter which he had written to the president produced a resolution in Congress, that the service of the men engaged in the war did not expire until the ratification of the definitive articles of peace ; but that the commander-in-chief might grant furloughs to such as he thought proper, and that they should be allowed to take their arms with them.

Washington availed himself freely of this permission : furloughs were granted without stint ; the men set out singly or in small parties for their rustic homes, and the danger and inconvenience were avoided of disbanding large masses, at a time, of unpaid soldiery. Now and then were to be seen three or four in a group, bound probably to the same neighborhood, beguiling the way with camp jokes and camp stories. The war-worn soldier was always kindly received at the farm-house along the road, where he might shoulder his gun and fight over his battles. The men thus dismissed on furlough were never called upon to rejoin the army. Once at home, they sank into domestic life ; their weapons were hung up over their fire-places ; military trophies of the Revolution to be prized by future generations.

In the mean time Sir Guy Carleton was making preparations for the evacuation of the city of New York. The moment he had received the royal order for the cessation of hostilities, he had written for all the shipping that could be procured from Europe and the West Indies. As early as the 27th of April a fleet had sailed for different parts of Nova Scotia, carrying off about seven thousand persons, with all their effects. A great part of these were troops, but many were royalists and refugees, exiled by the laws of the United States. They looked forward with a dreary eye to their voyage, "bound," as one of them said, "to a country where there were nine months of winter and three months of cold weather every year."

On the 6th of May a personal conference took place between Washington and Sir Guy at Orangetown, about the transfer

of posts in the United States, held by the British troops, and the delivery of all property stipulated by the treaty to be given up to the Americans. On the 8th of May, Egbert Benson, William S. Smith, and Daniel Parker, were commissioned by Congress to inspect and superintend at New York the embarkation of persons and property, in fulfilment of the seventh article of the provisional treaty.

While sadness and despair prevailed among the Tories and refugees in New York, the officers in the patriot camp on the Hudson were not without gloomy feelings at the thought of their approaching separation from each other. Eight years of dangers and hardships, shared in common and nobly sustained, had welded their hearts together, and made it hard to rend them asunder. Prompted by such feelings, General Knox, ever noted for generous impulses, suggested, as a mode of perpetuating the friendships thus formed, and keeping alive the brotherhood of the camp, the formation of a society composed of the officers of the army. The suggestion met with universal concurrence, and the hearty approbation of Washington.

Meetings were held, at which the Baron Steuben, as senior officer, presided. A plan was drafted by a committee composed of Generals Knox, Hand, and Huntingdon, and Captain Shaw; and the society was organized at a meeting held on the 13th of May, at the baron's quarters in the old Verplanck House, near Fishkill.

By its formula, the officers of the American army in the most solemn manner combined themselves into one society of friends: to endure as long as they should endure, or any of their eldest male posterity, and in failure thereof, their collateral branches who might be judged worthy of being its supporters and members. In memory of the illustrious Roman, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus, who retired from war to the peaceful duties of the citizen, it was to be called "The Society of the Cincinnati." The objects proposed by it were to preserve inviolate the rights and liberties for which they had contended; to promote and cherish national honor and union between the States; to maintain brotherly kindness towards each other, and extend relief to such officers and their families as might stand in need of it.

In order to obtain funds for the purpose, each officer was to contribute one month's pay, the interest only to be appropriated to the relief of the unfortunate. The general society, for the sake of frequent communications, was to be divided into State societies, and these again into districts. The general society was to meet annually on the first Monday in May, the

State societies on each 4th of July, the districts as often as should be agreed on by the State society.

The society was to have an insignia called "The Order of the Cincinnati." It was to be a golden American eagle, bearing on its breast emblematical devices; this was to be suspended by a deep-blue ribbon two inches wide, edged with white; significative of the union of America with France.

Individuals of the respective States, distinguished for patriotism and talents, might be admitted as honorary members for life; their numbers never to exceed a ratio of one to four. The French ministers who had officiated at Philadelphia, and the French admirals, generals, and colonels, who had served in the United States, were to be presented with the insignia of the order, and invited to become members.

Washington was chosen unanimously to officiate as president of it, until the first general meeting, to be held in May, 1784.

On the 8th of June, Washington addressed a letter to the governors of the several States on the subject of the dissolution of the army. The opinion of it breathes that aspiration after the serene quiet of private life, which had been his dream of happiness throughout the storms and trials of his anxious career, but the full fruition of which he was never to realize.

"The great object," said he, "for which I had the honor to hold an appointment in the service of my country being accomplished, I am now preparing to return to that domestic retirement which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh, through a long and painful absence, and in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose."

His letter then described the enviable condition of the citizens of America. "Sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessities and conveniences of life; and acknowledged possessors of 'absolute freedom and independence.'" "This is the time," said he, "of their political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the moment to establish or ruin their national character forever. This is the favorable moment to give such a tone to the federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and

exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one State against another to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes.

"With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak the language of freedom and sincerity without disguise.

"I am aware, however," continues he, modestly, "that those who differ from me in political sentiment may perhaps remark, that I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty, and may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is the result of the purest intention. But the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives; the part I have hitherto acted in life; the determination I have formed of not taking any share in public business hereafter; the ardent desire I feel, and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying, in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government; will, I flatter myself, sooner or later convince my countrymen that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address."

He then proceeded ably and eloquently to discuss what he considered the four things essential to the well-being, and even the existence of the United States as an independent power.

First. An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head, and a perfect acquiescence of the several States, in the full exercise of the prerogative vested in such a head by the constitution.

Second. A sacred regard to public justice in discharging debts and fulfilling contracts made by Congress, for the purpose of carrying on the war.

Third. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; in which care should be taken to place the militia throughout the Union on a regular, uniform and efficient footing. "The militia of this country," said he, "must be considered as the palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility. It is essential, therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole; that the formation and discipline of the militia of the continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of arms, accoutrements and military apparatus should be introduced in every part of the United States."

And Fourth. A disposition among the people of the United States to forget local prejudices and policies; to make mutual concessions, and to sacrifice individual advantages to the interests of the community.

These four things Washington pronounced the pillars on which the glorious character must be supported. "Liberty is the basis; and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country."

We forbear to go into the ample and admirable reasoning with which he expatiates on these heads, and above all, enforces the sacred inviolability of the Union; they have become familiar with every American mind, and ought to govern every American heart. Nor will we dwell upon his touching appeal on the subject of the half pay and commutation promised to the army, and which began to be considered in the odious light of a pension. "That provision," said he, "should be viewed as it really was—a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give to the officers of the army for services then to be performed. It was the only means to prevent a total dereliction of the service. It was a part of their hire. I may be allowed to say it was the price of their blood and of your independency; it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honor."

Although we have touched upon but a part of this admirable letter, we cannot omit its affecting close, addressed as it was to each individual governor.

"I have thus freely declared what I wished to make known, before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me. The task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the chief magistrate of your State, at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office and all the employments of public life.

"It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature at their next meeting, and that they may be considered the legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the divine benediction on it.

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all

to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which are the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without whose example in those things we can never hope to be a happy nation."

While the patriot army, encamped under the eye of Washington, bore their hardships and privations without flinching, or returned quietly to their homes with, as yet, no actual reward but the weapons with which they had vindicated their country's cause, about eighty newly recruited soldiers of the Pennsylvania line, stationed at Lancaster, suddenly mutinied and set off in a body for Philadelphia, to demand redress of fancied grievances from the legislature of the State. Arriving at the city, they were joined by about two hundred comrades from the barracks, and proceeded on the 2d of June with beat of drum and fixed bayonets to the State House, where Congress and the supreme executive council of Pennsylvania were in session.

Placing sentinels at every door to prevent egress, they sent in a written message to the president and council, threatening military violence if their demands were not complied with in the course of twenty minutes.

Though these menaces were directed against the State government, Congress felt itself outraged by being thus surrounded and blockaded for several hours by an armed soldiery. Fearing lest the State of Pennsylvania might not be able to furnish adequate protection, it adjourned to meet within a few days at Princeton; sending information, in the mean time, to Washington of this mutinous outbreak.

The latter immediately detached General Howe with fifteen hundred men to quell the mutiny and punish the offenders; at the same time, in a letter to the President of Congress, he expressed his indignation and distress at seeing a handful of men, "contemptible in numbers and equally so in point of service, and not worthy to be called soldiers," insulting the sovereign authority of the Union, and that of their own State. He vindicated the army at large, however, from the stain the behavior of these men might cast upon it. These were mere recruits, soldiers of a day, who had not borne the heat and burden of the war, and had in reality few hardships to complain of. He contrasted their conduct with that of the soldiers recently furloughed;—veterans, who had patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold; who had suffered and bled without a murmur, and who had retired, in perfect good order, to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts or a farthing of



money in their pockets. While he gave vent to his indignation and scorn, roused by the "arrogance and folly and wickedness of the mutineers," he declared that he could not sufficiently admire the fidelity, bravery, and patriotism of the rest of the army.

Fortunately, before the troops under General Howe reached Philadelphia, the mutiny had been suppressed without bloodshed. Several of the mutineers were tried by a court-martial, two were condemned to death, but ultimately pardoned, and four received corporal punishment.

Washington now found his situation at head-quarters irksome; there was little to do, and he was liable to be incessantly teased with applications and demands, which he had neither the means nor power to satisfy. He resolved, therefore, to while away part of the time that must intervene before the arrival of the definitive treaty, by making a tour to the northern and western parts of the State, and visiting the places which had been the theatre of important military transactions. He had another object in view; he desired to facilitate as far as in his power the operations which would be necessary for occupying, as soon as evacuated by British troops, the posts ceded by the treaty of peace.

Governor Clinton accompanied him on the expedition. They set out by water from Newburg, ascended the Hudson to Albany, visited Saratoga and the scene of Burgoyne's surrender, embarked on Lake George, where light boats had been provided for them, traversed that beautiful lake so full of historic interest, proceeded to Ticonderoga and Crown Point; and after reconnoitring those eventful posts, returned to Schenectady, whence they proceeded up the valley of the Mohawk River "to have a view," writes Washington, "of that tract of country which is so much celebrated for the fertility of its soil and the beauty of its situation." Having reached Fort Schuyler, formerly Fort Stanwix, they crossed over to Wood Creek, which empties into Oneida Lake, and affords the water communication with Ontario. They then traversed the country to the head of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, and viewed Lake Otsego and the portage between that lake and the Mohawk River.

Washington returned to head-quarters at Newburg on the 5th of August, after a tour of at least seven hundred and fifty miles, performed in nineteen days, and for the most part on horseback. In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, written two or three months afterwards, and giving a sketch of his tour

through what was, as yet, an unstudied wilderness; he writes: "Prompted by these actual observations, I could not help taking a more extensive view of the vast inland navigation of these United States from maps and the information of others; and could not but be struck with the immense extent and importance of it, and with the goodness of that Providence which has dealt its favors to us with so profuse a hand; would to God, we may have wisdom enough to improve them. I shall not rest contented till I have explored the western country, and traversed those lines, or a great part of them, which have given bounds to a new empire." The vast advantages of internal communication between the Hudson and the great lakes, which dawned upon Washington's mind in the course of his tour, have since been realized in that grand artery of national wealth, the Erie Canal.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE ARMY TO BE DISCHARGED — PARTING ADDRESS OF WASHINGTON — EVACUATION OF NEW YORK — PARTING SCENE OF WASHINGTON WITH HIS OFFICERS AT NEW YORK — WASHINGTON RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION TO CONGRESS — RETIRES TO MOUNT VERNON.

By a proclamation of Congress, dated 18th of October, all officers and soldiers absent on furlough were discharged from further service; and all others who had engaged to serve during the war, were to be discharged from and after the 3d of November. A small force only, composed of those who had enlisted for a definite time, were to be retained in service until the peace establishment should be organized.

In general orders of November 2, Washington, after advertising to this proclamation, adds: "It only remains for the commander-in-chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States, however widely dispersed the individuals who compose them may be, and to bid them an affectionate and a long farewell."

He then goes on to make them one of those paternal addresses which so eminently characterize his relationship with his army, so different from that of any other commander. He takes a brief view of the glorious struggle from which they had just emerged; the unpromising circumstances under which they had undertaken it, and the signal interposition of Providence in

behalf of their feeble condition ; the unparalleled perseverance of the American armies for eight long years, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement ; a perseverance which he justly pronounces to be little short of a *standing miracle*.

Adverting then to the enlarged prospects of happiness opened by the confirmation of national independence and sovereignty, and the ample and profitable employments held out in a Republic so happily circumstanced, he exhorts them to maintain the strongest attachment to THE UNION, and to carry with them into civil society the most conciliatory dispositions ; proving themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they had been victorious as soldiers ; feeling assured that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry would not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field.

After a warm expression of thanks to the officers and men for the assistance he had received from every class, and in every instance, he adds :

“ To the various branches of the army the General takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his invariable attachment and friendship. He wishes more than bare professions were in his power ; that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life. He flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him has been done.

“ And being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend those who, under the Divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander-in-chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed forever.”

There was a straightforward simplicity in Washington's addresses to his army ; they were so void of tumid phrases or rhetorical embellishments ; the counsels given in them were so sound and practicable ; the feelings expressed in them so kind and benevolent ; and so perfectly in accordance with his character and conduct, that they always had an irresistible effect on the rudest and roughest hearts.

A person who was present at the breaking up of the army, and whom we have had frequent occasion to cite, observes, on the conduct of the troops, "The advice of their beloved commander-in-chief, and the resolves of Congress to pay and compensate them in such manner as the ability of the United States would permit, operated to keep them quiet and prevent tumult, but no description would be adequate to the painful circumstances of the parting scene." "Both officers and soldiers, long unaccustomed to the affairs of private life, turned loose on the world to starve, and to become the prey to vulture speculators. Never can that melancholy day be forgotten when friends, companions for seven long years in joy and in sorrow, were torn asunder without the hope of ever meeting again, and with prospects of a miserable subsistence in future."<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding every exertion had been made for the evacuation of New York, such was the number of persons and the quantity of effects of all kinds to be conveyed away, that the month of November was far advanced before it could be completed. Sir Guy Carleton had given notice to Washington of the time he supposed the different posts would be vacated, that the Americans might be prepared to take possession of them. In consequence of this notice, General George Clinton, at that time Governor of New York, had summoned the members of the State council to convene at East Chester on the 21st of November, for the purpose of establishing civil government in the districts hitherto occupied by the British; and a detachment of troops was marched from West Point to be ready to take possession of the posts as they were vacated.

On the 21st the British troops were drawn in from the oft-disputed post of King's Bridge and from M'Gowan's Pass, also from the various posts on the eastern part of Long Island. Paulus Hook was relinquished on the following day, and the afternoon of the 25th of November was appointed by Sir Guy for the evacuation of the city and the opposite village of Brooklyn.

Washington, in the mean time, had taken his station at Harlem, accompanied by Governor Clinton, who, in virtue of his office, was to take charge of the city. They found there General Knox with the detachment from West Point. Sir Guy Carleton had intimated a wish that Washington would be

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<sup>1</sup> Thacher, p. 421.

at hand to take immediate possession of the city, and prevent all outrage, as he had been informed of a plot to plunder the place whenever the king's troops should be withdrawn. He had engaged, also, that the guards of the redoubts on the East River, covering the upper part of the town, should be the first to be withdrawn, and that an officer should be sent to give Washington's advanced guard information of their retiring.

Although Washington doubted the existence of any such plot as that which had been reported to the British commander, yet he took precautions accordingly. On the morning of the 25th the American troops, composed of dragoons, light infantry and artillery, moved from Harlem to the Bowery at the upper part of the city. There they remained until the troops in that quarter were withdrawn, when they marched into the city and took possession, the British embarking from the lower parts.

A formal entry then took place of the military and civil authorities. General Washington and Governor Clinton, with their suites, on horseback, led the procession, escorted by a troop of Westchester cavalry. Then came the lieutenant-governor and members of the council, General Knox, and the officers of the army, the speaker of the Assembly, and a large number of citizens on horseback and on foot.

An American lady, who was at that time very young and had resided during the latter part of the war in the city, has given us an account of the striking contrast between the American and British troops. "We had been accustomed for a long time," said she, "to military display in all the finish and finery of garrison life; the troops just leaving us were as if equipped for show, and with their scarlet uniforms and burnished arms, made a brilliant display; the troops that marched in, on the contrary, were ill-clad and weather-beaten, and made a forlorn appearance; but then they were *our* troops, and as I looked at them, and thought upon all they had done and suffered for us, my heart and my eyes were full, and I admired and gloried in them the more, because they were weather-beaten and forlorn."

The city was now a scene of public festivity and rejoicing. The governor gave banquets to the French ambassador, the commander-in-chief, the military and civil officers, and a large number of the most eminent citizens, and at night the public were entertained by splendid fireworks.

In the course of a few days Washington prepared to depart for Annapolis, where Congress was assembling, with the intention of asking leave to resign his command. A barge was in

waiting about noon on the 4th of December at Whitehall Ferry to convey him across the Hudson to Paulus Hook. The principal officers of the army assembled at Fraunces' Tavern in the neighborhood of the ferry, to take a final leave of him. On entering the room, and finding himself surrounded by his old companions in arms, who had shared with him so many scenes of hardship, difficulty, and danger, his agitated feelings overcame his usual self-command. Filling a glass of wine, and turning upon them his benignant but saddened countenance, "With a heart full of love and gratitude," said he, "I now take leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

Having drunk this farewell benediction, he added with emotion, "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand."

General Knox, who was the nearest, was the first to advance. Washington, affected even to tears, grasped his hand and gave him a brother's embrace. In the same affectionate manner he took leave severally of the rest. Not a word was spoken. The deep feeling and manly tenderness of these veterans in the parting moment could find no utterance in words. Silent and solemn they followed their loved commander as he left the room, passed through a corps of light infantry, and proceeded on foot to Whitehall Ferry. Having entered the barge, he turned to them, took off his hat and waved a silent adieu. They replied in the same manner, and having watched the barge until the intervening point of the Battery shut it from sight, returned, still solemn and silent, to the place where they had assembled.<sup>1</sup>

On his way to Annapolis, Washington stopped for a few days at Philadelphia, where, with his usual exactness in matters of business, he adjusted with the Comptroller of the Treasury his accounts from the commencement of the war down to the 13th of the actual month of December. These were all in his own handwriting, and kept in the cleanest and most accurate manner, each entry being accompanied by a statement of the occasion and object of the charge.

The gross amount was about fourteen thousand five hundred pounds sterling; in which were included moneys expended for secret intelligence and service, and in various incidental charges. All this, it must be noted, was an account of money

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<sup>1</sup> Marshall's Life of Washington.

actually expended in the progress of the war ; not for arrearage of pay ; for it will be recollected Washington accepted no pay. Indeed, on the final adjustment of his accounts, he found himself a considerable loser, having frequently, in a hurry of business, neglected to credit himself with sums drawn from his private purse in moments of exigency.

The schedule of his public account furnishes not the least among the many noble and impressive lessons taught by his character and example. It stands a touchstone of honesty in office, and a lasting rebuke on the lavish expenditure of the public money, too often heedlessly, if not wilfully, indulged by military commanders.

In passing through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, the scenes of his anxious and precarious campaigns, Washington was everywhere hailed with enthusiasm by the people, and greeted with addresses by legislative assemblies, and learned and religious institutions. He accepted them all with the modesty inherent in his nature ; little thinking that this present popularity was but the early outbreaking of a fame, that was to go on widening and deepening from generation to generation, and extending over the whole civilized world.

Being arrived at Annapolis, he addressed a letter to the President of Congress, on the 20th of December, requesting to know in what manner it would be most proper to offer his resignation ; whether in writing or at an audience. The latter mode was adopted, and the Hall of Congress appointed for the ceremonial.

A letter from Washington to the Baron Steuben, written on the 23d, concludes as follows : " This is the last letter I shall write while I continue in the service of my country. The hour of my resignation is fixed at twelve to-day, after which I shall become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac."

At twelve o'clock the gallery, and a great part of the floor of the Hall of Congress, were filled with ladies, with public functionaries of the State, and with general officers. The members of Congress were seated and covered, as representatives of the sovereignty of the Union. The gentlemen present as spectators were standing and uncovered.

Washington entered, conducted by the secretary of Congress, and took his seat in a chair appointed for him. After a brief pause the president (General Mifflin) informed him, that " the United States in Congress assembled, were prepared to receive his communication."

Washington then rose, and in a dignified and impressive manner, delivered a short address.

"The great events," said he, "on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I now have the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country."

After expressing his obligations to the army in general, and acknowledging the peculiar services, and distinguished merits of the confidential officers who had been attached to his person, and composed his family during the war, and whom he especially recommended to the favor of Congress, he continued —

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God; and those who have the superintendence of them, to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

"Few tragedies ever drew so many tears from so many beautiful eyes," says a writer who was present, "at the moving manner in which his Excellency took his final leave of Congress."<sup>1</sup>

Having delivered his commission into the hands of the president, the latter, in reply to his address, bore testimony to the patriotism with which he had answered to the call of his country, and defended its invaded rights before it had formed alliances, and while it was without funds or a government to support him; to the wisdom and fortitude with which he had conducted the great military contest, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. "You retire," added he, "from the theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command: it will continue to animate remotest ages."

The very next morning Washington left Annapolis, and hastened to his beloved Mount Vernon, where he arrived the same day, on Christmas-eve, in a frame of mind suited to enjoy the sacred and genial festival.

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<sup>1</sup> Editor of the Maryland Gazette.



"The scene is at last closed," said he in a letter to Governor Clinton; "I feel myself eased of a load of public care. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

## CHAPTER IX.

WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON — A SOLDIER'S REPOSE — PLANS OF DOMESTIC LIFE — KIND OFFER TO THE COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA — HISTORICAL APPLICATIONS — NEWS OF JACOB VAN BRAAM — OPENING OF SPRING — AGRICULTURAL LIFE RESUMED — RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FAIRFAXES — MEETING OF THE ORDER OF CINCINNATI — TOUR OF WASHINGTON AND DR. CRAIK TO THE WEST — IDEAS OF INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT — PARTING WITH LAFAYETTE.

For some time after his return to Mount Vernon, Washington was in a manner locked up by the ice and snow of an uncommonly rigorous winter, so that social intercourse was interrupted, and he could not even pay a visit of duty and affection to his aged mother at Fredericksburg. But it was enough for him at present that he was at length at home at Mount Vernon. Yet the habitudes of the camp still haunted him; he could hardly realize that he was free from military duties; on waking in the morning he almost expected to hear the drum going its stirring rounds and beating the reveillé.

"Strange as it may seem," writes he to General Knox, "it is nevertheless true, that it was not until very lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had any thing to do with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a weary traveller must do, who, after treading many a weary step, with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing, with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

And in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Free from the

bustle of a camp and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame; the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries — as if this globe was insufficient for us all; and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers.”

And subsequently, in a letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, inviting her to America to see the country, “young, rude, and uncultivated as it is,” for the liberties of which her husband had fought, bled, and acquired much glory, and where everybody admired and loved him, he adds: “I am now enjoying domestic ease under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, in a small villa, with the implements of husbandry and lambkins about me. . . . Come, then, let me entreat you, and call my cottage your own; for your doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility; and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles.”

During the winter storms, he anticipates the time when the return of the sun will enable him to welcome his friends and companions in arms to partake of his hospitality; and lays down his unpretending plan of receiving the curious visitors who are likely to throng in upon him. “My manner of living,” writes he to a friend, “is plain, and I do not mean to be put out of it. A glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready; and such as will be content to partake of them, are always welcome. Those who expect more will be disappointed.”

Some degree of economy was necessary, for his financial concerns had suffered during the war, and the products of his estate had fallen off during his long absence.

In the mean time the supreme council of Pennsylvania, properly appreciating the disinterestedness of his conduct, and

aware that popular love and popular curiosity would attract crowds of visitors to Mount Vernon, and subject him to extraordinary expenses, had instructed their delegates in Congress to call the attention of that body to these circumstances, with a view to produce some national reward for his eminent services. Before acting upon these instructions, the delegates were directed to send a copy of them to Washington for his approbation.

He received the document while buried in accounts and calculations, and when, had he been of a mercenary disposition, the offered intervention in his favor would have seemed most seasonable; but he at once most gratefully and respectfully declined it, jealously maintaining the satisfaction of having served his country at the sacrifice of his private interests.

Applications began to be made to him by persons desirous of writing the history of the Revolution, for access to the public papers in his possession. He excused himself from submitting to their inspection those relative to the occurrences and transactions of his late command, until Congress should see fit to open their archives to the historian.

His old friend, Dr. Craik, made a similar application to Washington in behalf of a person who purposed to write his memoirs. He replied, that any memoir of his life distinct and unconnected with the general history of the war, would rather hurt his feelings than flatter his pride, while he could not furnish the papers and information connected with it without subjecting himself to the imputation of vanity, adding: "I had rather leave it to posterity to think and say what they please of me, than, by any act of mine, to have vanity or ostentation imputed to me."

It was a curious circumstance, that scarce had Washington retired from the bustle of arms and hung up his sword at Mount Vernon, when he received a letter from the worthy who had first taught him the use of that sword in these very halls. In a word, Jacob Van Braam, his early teacher of the sword exercise, his fellow campaigner and unlucky interpreter in the affair of the Great Meadows, turned up once more. His letter gave a glance over the current of his life. It would appear that after the close of the French war, he had been allowed half pay in consideration of his services and misadventures; and, in process of time, had married, and settled on a farm in Wales with his wife and his wife's mother. He had carried with him to England a strong feeling in favor of America, and on the breaking out of the Revolution had been very free, and,

as he seemed to think, eloquent and effective in speaking in all companies and at country meetings against the American war. Suddenly, as if to stop his mouth, he received orders from Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, to join his regiment (the 60th), in which he was appointed eldest captain in the 3d battalion. In vain he pleaded his rural occupations; his farm cultivated at so much cost, for which he was in debt, and which must go to ruin should he abandon it so abruptly. No excuse was admitted—he must embark and sail for East Florida, or lose his half pay. He accordingly sailed for St. Augustine in the beginning of 1776, with a couple of hundred recruits picked up in London, resolving to sell out of the army on the first opportunity. By a series of cross-purposes he was prevented from doing so until in 1779, having in the interim made a campaign in Georgia. “He quitted the service,” he adds, “with as much pleasure as ever a young man entered it.”

He then returned to England and took up his residence in Devonshire; but his invincible propensity to talk against the ministry made his residence there uncomfortable. His next move, therefore, was to the old fertile province of Orleánnais in France, where he was still living near Malesherbes, apparently at his ease, enjoying the friendship of the distinguished personage of that name, and better versed, it is to be hoped, in the French language than when he officiated as interpreter in the capitulation at the Great Meadows. The worthy major appeared to contemplate with joy and pride the eminence to which his early pupil in the sword exercise had attained.

“Give me leave, sir, before I conclude,” writes he, “to pour out the sentiments of my soul in congratulations for your successes in the American contest; and in wishing you a long life, to enjoy the blessing of a great people whom you have been the chief instrument in freeing from bondage.”

So disappears from the scene one of the earliest personages of our history.

As spring advanced, Mount Vernon, as had been anticipated, began to attract numerous visitors. They were received in the frank, unpretending style Washington had determined upon. It was truly edifying to behold how easily and contentedly he subsided from the authoritative commander-in-chief of armies, into the quiet country gentleman. There was nothing awkward or violent in the transition. He seemed to be in his natural element. Mrs. Washington, too, who had presided with quiet dignity at head-quarters, and cheered the wintry gloom of Valley Forge with her presence, presided with equal amenity

and grace at the simple board of Mount Vernon. She had a cheerful good sense that always made her an agreeable companion, and was an excellent manager.

She has been remarked for an inveterate habit of knitting. It had been acquired, or at least fostered, in the winter encampments of the Revolution, where she used to set an example to her lady visitors, by diligently plying her needles, knitting stockings for the poor destitute soldiery.

In entering upon the out-door management of his estate, Washington was but doing in person what he had long been doing through others. He had never virtually ceased to be the agriculturist. Throughout all his campaigns he had kept himself informed of the course of rural affairs at Mount Vernon. By means of maps on which every field was laid down and numbered, he was enabled to give directions for their several cultivation, and receive accounts of their several crops. No hurry of affairs prevented a correspondence with his overseer or agent, and he exacted weekly reports. Thus his rural were interwoven with his military cares; the agriculturist was mingled with the soldier; and those strong sympathies with the honest cultivators of the soil, and that paternal care of their interest to be noted throughout his military career, may be ascribed, in a great measure, to the sweetening influences of Mount Vernon. Yet as spring returned, and he resumed his rides about the beautiful neighborhood of this haven of his hopes, he must have been mournfully sensible, now and then, of the changes which time and events had effected there.

The Fairfaxes, the kind friends of his boyhood, and social companions of his riper years, were no longer at hand to share his pleasures and lighten his cares. There were no more hunting dinners at Belvoir. He paid a sad visit to that happy resort of his youth, and contemplated with a mournful eye its charred ruins, and the desolation of its once ornamented grounds. George William Fairfax, its former possessor, was in England; his political principles had detained him there during the war and part of his property had been sequestered; still, though an exile, he continued in heart a friend to America, his hand had been open to relieve the distresses of Americans in England, and he had kept up a cordial correspondence with Washington.

Old Lord Fairfax, the Nimrod of Greenway Court, Washington's early friend and patron, with whom he had first learned to follow the hounds, had lived on in a green old age at his sylvan retreat in the beautiful valley of the Shenan-

doah; popular with his neighbors and unmolested by the Whigs, although frank and open in his adherence to Great Britain. He had attained his ninety-second year, when tidings of the surrender of Yorktown wounded the national pride of the old cavalier to the quick, and snapped the attenuated thread of his existence.<sup>1</sup>

The time was now approaching when the first general meeting of the order of Cincinnati was to be held, and Washington saw with deep concern a popular jealousy awakened concerning it. Judge Burke, of South Carolina, had denounced it in a pamphlet as an attempt to elevate the military above the civil classes, and to institute an order of nobility. The Legislature of Massachusetts sounded an alarm that was echoed in Connecticut, and prolonged from State to State. The whole Union was put on its guard against this effort to form a hereditary aristocracy out of the military chiefs and powerful families of the several States.

Washington endeavored to allay this jealousy. In his letters to the presidents of the State societies, notifying the meeting which was to be held in Philadelphia on the 1st of May, he expressed his earnest solicitude that it should be respectable for numbers and abilities, and wise and deliberate in its proceedings, so as to convince the public that the objects of the institution were patriotic and trustworthy.

The society met at the appointed time and place. Washington presided, and by his sagacious counsels effected modifications of its constitution. The hereditary principle, and the power of electing honorary members, were abolished, and it was reduced to the harmless, but highly respectable footing on which it still exists.

In notifying the French military and naval officers included in the society of the changes which had taken place in its constitution, he expressed his ardent hopes that it would render

<sup>1</sup> So, at least, records in homely prose and verse a reverend historiographer of Mount Vernon. "When old Lord Fairfax heard that Washington had captured Lord Cornwallis and all his army, he called to his black waiter, 'Come, Joe! carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die!'"

Then up rose Joe, all at the word,  
And took his master's arm,  
And thus to bed he softly led  
The lord of Greenway farm.

There oft he called on Britain's name,  
And oft he wept full sore,  
Then sighed — thy will, oh Lord, be done —  
And word spake never more.

See WEEMS' *Life of Washington*.

permanent those friendships and connections which had happily taken root between the officers of the two nations. All clamors against the order now ceased. It became a rallying place for old comrades in arms, and Washington continued to preside over it until his death.

In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, for whom he felt an especial regard, after inviting him to the meeting, he adds: "I will only repeat to you the assurance of my friendship, and of the pleasure I should feel in seeing you in the shade of those trees which my hands have planted; and which, by their rapid growth, at once indicate a knowledge of my declining years, and their disposition to spread their mantles over me, before I go hence to return no more."

On the 17th of August he was gladdened by having the Marquis de Lafayette under his roof, who had recently arrived from France. The marquis passed a fortnight with him, a loved and cherished guest, at the end of which he departed for a time to be present at the ceremony of a treaty with the Indians.

Washington now prepared for a tour to the west of the Appalachian Mountains, to visit his lands on the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers. Dr. Craik, the companion of his various campaigns, and who had accompanied him in 1770 on a similar tour, was to be his fellow-traveller. The way they were to travel may be gathered from Washington's directions to the doctor:—"You will have occasion to take nothing from home but a servant to look after your horses, and such bedding as you may think proper to make use of. I will carry a marquee, some camp utensils, and a few stores. A boat, or some other kind of vessel, will be provided for the voyage down the river, either at my place on the Youghiogheny or Fort Pitt, measures for this purpose having already been taken. A few medicines, and hooks and lines, you may probably want."

This soldier-like tour, made in hardy military style, with tent, pack-horses, and frugal supplies, took him once more among the scenes of his youthful expeditions when a land surveyor in the employ of Lord Fairfax; a leader of Virginia militia, or an aide-de-camp of the unfortunate Braddock. A veteran now in years, and a general renowned in arms, he soberly permitted his steed to pick his way across the mountains by the old military route, still called Braddock's Road, over which he had spurred in the days of youthful ardor. His original intention had been to survey and inspect his lands on the Monongahela River; then to descend the Ohio to the great Kanawha, where also he had large tracts of wild land. On arriving on the

Monongahela, however, he heard such accounts of discontent and irritation among the Indian tribes, that he did not consider it prudent to venture among them. Some of his land on the Monongahela was settled; the rest was in the wilderness, and of little value in the present unquiet state of the country. He abridged his tour, therefore; proceeded no further west than the Monongahela; ascended that river, and then struck southward through the wild, unsettled regions of the Alleghanies, until he came out into the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton. He returned to Mount Vernon on the 4th of October; having, since the 1st of September, travelled on horseback six hundred and eighty miles, for a great part of the time in wild, mountainous country, where he was obliged to encamp at night. This, like his tour to the northern forts with Governor Clinton, gave proof of his unfailing vigor and activity.

During all this tour he had carefully observed the course and character of the streams flowing from the west into the Ohio, and the distance of their navigable parts from the head navigation of the rivers east of the mountains, with the nearest and best portage between them. For many years he had been convinced of the practicability of an easy and short communication between the Potomac and James Rivers, and the waters of the Ohio, and thence on to the great chain of lakes; and of the vast advantages that would result therefrom to the States of Virginia and Maryland. He had even attempted to set a company on foot to undertake at their own expense the opening of such a communication, but the breaking out of the Revolution had put a stop to the enterprise. One object of his recent tour was to make observations and collect information on the subject; and all that he had seen and heard quickened his solicitude to carry the scheme into effect.

Political as well as commercial interests, he conceived, were involved in the enterprise. He had noticed that the flanks and rear of the United States were possessed by foreign and formidable powers, who might lure the western people into a trade and alliance with them. The Western States, he observed, stood as it were upon a pivot, so that the touch of a feather might turn them any way. They had looked down the Mississippi, and been tempted in that direction by the facilities of sending every thing down the stream; whereas they had no means of coming to us but by long land transportations and rugged roads. The jealous and untoward disposition of the Spaniards, it was true, almost barred the use of the Mississippi; but they might change their policy, and invite trade in that



direction. The retention by the British government, also, of the posts of Detroit, Niagara and Oswego, though contrary to the spirit of the treaty, shut up the channel of trade in that quarter. These posts, however, would eventually be given up; and then, he was persuaded, the people of New York would lose no time in removing every obstacle in the way of a water communication; and "I shall be mistaken," said he, "if they do not build vessels for the navigation of the lakes, which will supersede the necessity of coasting on either side."

It behooved Virginia, therefore, to lose no time in availing herself of the present favorable conjuncture to secure a share of western trade by connecting the Potomac and James Rivers; with the waters beyond the mountains. The industry of the western settlers had hitherto been checked by the want of outlets to their products, owing to the before-mentioned obstacles: "But smooth the road," said he, "and make easy the way for them, and then see what an influx of articles will pour upon us; how amazingly our exports will be increased by them, and how amply all shall be compensated for any trouble and expense we may encounter to effect it."

Such were some of the ideas ably and amply set forth by him in a letter to Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, who, struck with his plan for opening the navigation of the western waters, laid the letter before the State legislature. The favor with which it was received induced Washington to repair to Richmond and give his personal support to the measure. He arrived there on the 15th of November. On the following morning a committee of five members of the House of Assembly, headed by Patrick Henry, waited on him in behalf of that body, to testify their reverence for his character and affection for his person, and their sense of the proofs given by him since his return to private life, that no change of situation could turn his thoughts from the welfare of his country. The suggestions of Washington in his letter to the governor, and his representations, during this visit to Richmond, gave the first impulse to the great system of internal improvement since pursued throughout the United States.

At Richmond he was joined by the Marquis de Lafayette; who since their separation had accompanied the commissioners to Fort Schuyler, and been present at the formation of a treaty with the Indians; after which he had made a tour of the Eastern States, "crowned everywhere," writes Washington, "with wreaths of love and respect."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Washington to the Marchioness de Lafayette.

They returned together to Mount Vernon, where Lafayette again passed several days, a cherished inmate of the domestic circle.

When his visit was ended, Washington, to defer the parting scene, accompanied him to Annapolis. On returning to Mount Vernon, he wrote a farewell letter to the marquis, bordering more upon the sentimental than almost any other in his multifarious correspondence.

"In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I have travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And though I wished to answer no, my fears answered yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently, to my prospect of ever seeing you again."

## CHAPTER X.

SCHEME OF INLAND NAVIGATION — SHARE OF STOCK OFFERED TO WASHINGTON — DECLINED — RURAL IMPROVEMENTS — THE TAX OF LETTER-WRITING — THE TAX OF SITTING FOR LIKENESSES — ORNAMENTAL GARDENING — MANAGEMENT OF THE ESTATE — DOMESTIC LIFE — VISIT OF MR. WATSON — REVERENTIAL AWE INSPIRED BY WASHINGTON — IRKSOME TO HIM — INSTANCES OF HIS FESTIVE GAYETY — OF HIS LAUGHING — PASSION FOR HUNTING REVIVED — DEATH OF GENERAL GREENE — HIS CHARACTER — WASHINGTON'S REGRETS AND ENCOMIUMS — LETTERS TO THE FRENCH NOBLEMEN.

WASHINGTON'S zeal for the public good had now found a new channel; or, rather, his late tours into the interior of the Union had quickened ideas long existing in his mind on the subject of internal navigation. In a letter to Richard Henry Lee, recently chosen President of Congress, he urged it upon his attention; suggesting that the western waters should be explored, their

navigable capabilities ascertained, and that a complete map should be made of the country; that in all grants of land by the United States, there should be a reserve made for special sale of all mines, mineral and salt springs; that a medium price should be adopted for the western lands sufficient to prevent monopoly, but not to discourage useful settlers. He had a salutary horror of "land jobbers" and "roaming speculators," prowling about the country like wolves; marking and surveying valuable spots to the great disquiet of the Indian tribes. "The spirit of emigration is great," said he; "people have got impatient, and though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either."

In the latter part of December he was at Annapolis, at the request of the Assembly of Virginia, to arrange matters with the Assembly of Maryland respecting the communications between the Potomac and the western waters. Through his indefatigable exertions two companies were formed under the patronage of the governments of these States, for opening the navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers, and he was appointed president of both. By a unanimous vote of the Assembly of Virginia, fifty shares in the Potomac, and one hundred in the James River Company, were appropriated for his benefit, to the end that, while the great works he had promoted would remain monuments of his glory, they might also be monuments of the gratitude of his country. The aggregate amount of shares was about forty thousand dollars.

Washington was exceedingly embarrassed by the appropriation. To decline so noble and unequivocal a testimonial of the good opinion and good-will of his countrymen, might be construed into disrespect, yet he wished to be perfectly free to exercise his judgment and express his opinions in the matter, without being liable to the least suspicion of interested motives. It had been his fixed determination, also, when he surrendered his military command, never to hold any other office under government to which emolument might become a necessary appendage. From this resolution his mind had never swerved.

While, however, he declined to receive the proffered shares for his own benefit, he intimated a disposition to receive them in trust, to be applied to the use of some object or institution of a public nature. His wishes were complied with, and the shares were ultimately appropriated by him to institutions devoted to public education. Yet, though the love for his

country would thus interfere with his love for his home, the dream of rural retirement at Mount Vernon still went on.

"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs," he says, in a letter to a friend in England, "the better I am pleased with them; insomuch that I can nowhere find so much satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. While indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect, how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vainglory that can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquest."

"How pitiful, in the age of reason and religion, is that false ambition which desolates the world with fire and sword for the purpose of conquest and fame, compared to the milder virtues of making our neighbors and our fellow-men as happy as their frail convictions and perishable natures will permit them to be."

He had a congenial correspondent in his quondam brother-soldier, Governor Clinton of New York. whose spear, like his own, had been turned into a pruning-hook.

"Whenever the season is proper and an opportunity offers," writes he to the governor, "I shall be glad to receive the balsam-trees or others which you may think curious and exotic with us, as I am endeavoring to improve the grounds about my house in this way." He recommends to the governor's care certain grape-vines of the choicest kinds for the table, which an uncle of the Chevalier de Luzerne had engaged to send from France, and which must be about to arrive at New York. He is literally going to sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and devote himself to the quiet pleasures of rural life.

At the opening of the year (1785) the entries in his diary show him diligently employed in preparations to improve his groves and shrubbery. On the 10th of January he notes that the white thorn is full in berry. On the 20th he begins to clear the pine groves of undergrowth.

In February he transplants ivy under the walls of the garden to which it still clings. In March he is planting hemlock-trees, that most beautiful species of American evergreen, numbers of which had been brought hither from Ocequan. In April he is sowing holly berries in drills, some adjoining a green-brier hedge on the north side of the garden gate; others in a semicircle on the lawn. Many of the holly bushes thus produced are still flourishing about the place in full vigor.

He had learnt the policy, not sufficiently adopted in our country, of clothing his ornamented grounds as much as possible with evergreens, which resist the rigors of our winter, and keep up a cheering verdure throughout the year. Of the trees fitted for shade in pasture land he notest he locust, maple, black mulberry, black walnut, black gum, dogwood and sassafras, none of which, he observes, materially injure the grass beneath them.

Is then for once a soldier's dream realized? Is he in perfect enjoyment of that seclusion from the world and its distractions, which he had so often pictured to himself amid the hardships and turmoils of the camp? Alas, no! The "post," that "herald of a noisy world," invades his quiet and loads his table with letters, until correspondence becomes an intolerable burden.

He looks in despair at the daily accumulating mass of unanswered letters. "Many mistakenly think," writes he, "that I am retired to ease, and to that kind of tranquillity which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been obliged to write so much myself, as I have done since my retirement."<sup>1</sup> Again—"It is not the letters from my friends which give me trouble, or add aught to my perplexity. It is references to old matters, with which I have nothing to do; applications which often cannot be complied with; inquiries which would require the pen of a historian to satisfy; letters of compliment as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the commonplace business which employs my pen and my time often disagreeably. These, with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences."

From much of this drudgery of the pen he was subsequently relieved by Mr. Tobias Lear, a young gentleman of New Hampshire, a graduate of Harvard College, who acted as his private secretary, and at the same time took charge of the instruction of the two children of the late Mr. Parke Custis, whom Washington had adopted.

There was another tax imposed by his celebrity upon his time and patience. Applications were continually made to him to sit for his likeness. The following is his sportive reply to Mr. Francis Hopkinson, who applied in behalf of Mr. Pine:

"*'In for a penny in for a pound,'* is an old adage. I am

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Richard Henry Lee.

so hackneyed to the touches of the painter's pencil, that I am altogether at their beck, and sit 'like Patience on a monument,' while they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation as a colt is under the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill, than I to the painter's chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yield a ready obedience to your request, and to the views of Mr. Pine."

It was not long after this that M. Houdon, an artist of great merit, chosen by Mr. Jefferson and Dr. Franklin, arrived from Paris to make a study of Washington for a statue, for the Legislature of Virginia. He remained a fortnight at Mount Vernon, and having formed his model, took it with him to Paris, where he produced that excellent statue and likeness to be seen in the State House in Richmond, Virginia.

Being now in some measure relieved from the labors of the pen, Washington had more time to devote to his plan for ornamental cultivation of the grounds about his dwelling.

We find in his diary noted down with curious exactness, each day's labor and the share he took in it; his frequent rides to the Mill Swamp; the Dogue Creek; the "Plantation of the Neck," and other places along the Potomac in quest of young elms, ash-trees, white thorn, crab-apples, maples, mulberries, willows and lilacs; the winding walks which he lays out, and the trees and shrubs which he plants along them. Now he sows acorns and buck-eye nuts brought by himself from the Monongahela; now he opens vistas through the Pine Grove, commanding distant views through the woodlands; and now he twines round his columns scarlet honeysuckles, which his gardener tells him will blow all the summer.

His care-worn spirit freshens up in these employments. With him Mount Vernon is a kind of idyl. The transient glow of poetical feeling which once visited his bosom, when in boyhood he rhymed beneath its groves, seems about to return once more; and we please ourselves with noting among the trees set out by him, a group of young horse-chestnuts from Westmoreland, his native county, the haunt of his schoolboy days; which had been sent to him by Colonel Lee (Light-horse Harry), the son of his "Lowland Beauty."

A diagram of the plan in which he had laid out his grounds, still remains among his papers at Mount Vernon; the places are marked on it for particular trees and shrubs. Some of those

trees and shrubs are still to be found in the places thus assigned to them. In the present neglected state of Mount Vernon, its walks are overgrown, and vegetation runs wild ; but it is deeply interesting still to find traces of these toils in which Washington delighted, and to know that many of the trees which gave it its present umbrageous beauty were planted by his hand.

The ornamental cultivation of which we have spoken, was confined to the grounds appertaining to what was called the mansion-house farm ; but his estate included four other farms, all lying contiguous, and containing three thousand two hundred and sixty acres ; each farm having its bailiff or overseer, with a house for his accommodation, barns and out-houses for the produce, and cabins for the negroes. On a general map of the estate, drawn out by Washington himself, these farms were all laid down accurately and their several fields numbered ; he knew the soil and local qualities of each, and regulated the culture of them accordingly.

In addition to these five farms there were several hundred acres of fine woodland, so that the estate presented a beautiful diversity of land and water. In the stables near the mansion-house were the carriage and saddle horses, of which he was very choice ; on the four farms there were 54 draft horses, 12 mules, 317 head of black cattle, 360 sheep, and a great number of swine, which last ran at large in the woods.

He now read much on husbandry and gardening, and copied out treatises on those subjects. He corresponded also with the celebrated Arthur Young ; from whom he obtained seeds of all kinds, improved ploughs, plans for laying out farm-yards, and advice on various parts of rural economy.

“ Agriculture,” writes he to him, “ has ever been among the most favored of my amusements, though I have never possessed much skill in the art, and nine years’ total inattention to it has added nothing to a knowledge which is best understood from practice ; but with the means you have been so obliging as to furnish me, I shall return to it, though rather late in the day, with more alacrity than ever.”

In the management of his estate he was remarkably exact. No negligence on the part of the overseers or those under them was passed over unnoticed. He seldom used many words on the subject of his plans ; rarely asked advice ; but, when once determined, carried them directly and silently into execution ; and was not easily dissuaded from a project when once commenced.

We have shown, in a former chapter, his mode of apportion-

ing time at Mount Vernon, prior to the Revolution. The same system was, in a great measure, resumed. His active day began some time before the dawn. Much of his correspondence was despatched before breakfast, which took place at half-past seven. After breakfast he mounted his horse which stood ready at the door, and rode out to different parts of his estate, as he used to do to various parts of the camp, to see that all was right at the outposts, and every one at his duty. At half-past two he dined.

If there was no company he would write until dark, or, if pressed by business, until nine o'clock in the evening; otherwise he read in the evening, or amused himself with a game of whist.

His secretary, Mr. Lear, after two years' residence in the family on the most confidential footing, says, — "General Washington is, I believe, almost the only man of an exalted character, who does not lose some part of his respectability by an intimate acquaintance. I have never found a single thing that could lessen my respect for him. A complete knowledge of his honesty, uprightness and candor in all his private transactions, has sometimes led me to think him more than a man."

The children of Parke Custis formed a lively part of his household. He was fond of children and apt to unbend with them. Miss Custis, recalling in after life the scenes of her childhood, writes, "I have sometimes made him laugh most heartily from sympathy with my joyous and extravagant spirits;" she observes, however, that "he was a silent, thoughtful man. He spoke little generally; never of himself. I never heard him relate a single act of his life during the war. I have often seen him perfectly abstracted, his lips moving; but no sound was perceptible."

An observant traveller, Mr. Elkanah Watson, who visited Mount Vernon in the winter of 1785, bearer of a letter of introduction from General Greene and Colonel Fitzgerald, gives a home picture of Washington in his retirement. Though sure that his credentials would secure him a respectful reception, he says, "I trembled with awe, as I came into the presence of this great man. I found him at table with Mrs. Washington and his private family, and was received in the native dignity, and with that urbanity so peculiarly combined in the character of a soldier and an eminent gentleman. He soon put me at my ease, by unbending in a free and affable conversation.

"The cautious reserve which wisdom and policy dictated, whilst engaged in rearing the glorious fabric of our independ-



ance, was evidently the result of consummate prudence and not characteristic of his nature. I observed a peculiarity in his smile, which seemed to illuminate his eye; his whole countenance beamed with intelligence, while it commanded confidence and respect.

"I found him kind and benignant in the domestic circle; revered and beloved by all around him; agreeably social, without ostentation; delighting in anecdote and adventures; without assumption; his domestic arrangements harmonious and systematic. His servants seemed to watch his eye, and to anticipate his every wish; hence a look was equivalent to a command. His servant Billy, the faithful companion of his military career, was always at his side. Smiling content animated and beamed on every countenance in his presence."

In the evening Mr. Watson sat conversing for a full hour with Washington after all the family had retired, expecting, perhaps, to hear him fight over some of his battles; but, if so, he was disappointed, for he observes: "He modestly waived all allusion to the events in which he had acted so glorious and conspicuous a part. Much of his conversation had reference to the interior country, and to the opening of the navigation of the Potomac by canals and locks, at the Seneca, the Great and Little Falls. His mind appeared to be deeply absorbed by that object, then in earnest contemplation."

Mr. Watson had taken a severe cold in the course of a harsh winter journey, and coughed excessively. Washington pressed him to take some remedies, but he declined. After retiring for the night his coughing increased. "When some time had elapsed," writes he, "the door of my room was gently opened, and, on drawing my bed curtains, I beheld Washington himself, standing at my bedside with a bowl of hot tea in his hand. I was mortified and distressed beyond expression. This little incident, occurring in common life with an ordinary man, would not have been noticed; but as a trait of the benevolence and private virtue of Washington, deserves to be recorded."

The late Bishop White, in subsequent years, speaking of Washington's unassuming manners, observes: "I know no man who so carefully guarded against the discoursing of himself or of his acts, or of any thing that pertained to him; and it has occasionally occurred to me when in his company, that, if a stranger to his person were present, he would never have known from any thing said by him that he was conscious of having distinguished himself in the eye of the world."

An anecdote is told of Washington's conduct while com-

mander-in-chief, illustrative of his benignant attention to others, and his freedom from all assumption. While the army was encamped at Morristown, he one day attended a religious meeting where divine service was to be celebrated in the open air. A chair had been set out for his use. Just before the service commenced, a woman with a child in her arms approached. All the seats were occupied. Washington immediately rose, placed her in the chair which had been assigned to him, and remained standing during the whole service.<sup>1</sup>

The reverential awe with which his deeds and elevated position threw around him was often a source of annoyance to him in private life; especially when he perceived its effect upon the young and gay. We have been told of a case in point, when he made his appearance at a private ball where all were enjoying themselves with the utmost glee. The moment he entered the room the buoyant mirth was checked; the dance lost its animation; every face was grave; every tongue was silent. He remained for a time, endeavoring to engage in conversation with some of the young people, and to break the spell; finding it in vain, he retired sadly to the company of the elders in an adjoining room, expressing his regret that his presence should operate as such a damper. After a little while light laughter and happy voices again resounded from the ball-room; upon which he rose cautiously, approached on tiptoe the door, which was ajar, and there stood for some time a delighted spectator of the youthful revelry.

Washington in fact, though habitually grave and thoughtful, was of a social disposition, and loved cheerful society. He was fond of the dance; and it was the boast of many ancient dames in our day, who had been belles in the time of the Revolution, that they had danced minuets with him, or had him for a partner in contra-dances. There were balls in camp, in some of the dark times of the Revolution. "We had a little dance at my quarters," writes General Greene from Middlebrook, in March, 1779. "His Excellency and Mrs. Greene danced upwards of three hours without once sitting down. Upon the whole, we had a pretty little frisk."<sup>2</sup>

A letter of Colonel Tench Tilghman, one of Washington's aides-de-camp, gives an instance of the general's festive gayety, when in the above year the army was cantoned near Morristown. A large company, of which the general and Mrs. Washington, General and Mrs. Greene, and Mr. and Mrs. Olney

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<sup>1</sup> MS. notes of the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle.

<sup>2</sup> Greene to Colonel Wadsworth. MS.

were part, dined with Colonel and Mrs. Biddle. Some little time after the ladies had retired from table, Mr. Olney followed them into the next room. A clamor was raised against him as a deserter, and it was resolved that a party should be sent to demand him, and that if the ladies refused to give him up, he should be brought by force. Washington humored the joke, and offered to head the party. He led it with great formality to the door of the drawing-room, and sent in a summons. The ladies refused to give up the deserter. An attempt was made to capture him. The ladies came to the rescue. There was a *mêlée*; in the course of which his Excellency seems to have had a passage at arms with Mrs. Olney. The ladies were victorious, as they always ought to be, says the gallant Tilghman.<sup>1</sup>

More than one instance is told of Washington's being surprised into hearty fits of laughter, even during the war. We have recorded one produced by the sudden appearance of old General Putnam on horseback, with a female prisoner *en croupe*. The following is another which occurred at the camp at Morristown. Washington had purchased a young horse of great spirit and power. A braggadocio of the army, vain of his horsemanship, asked the privilege of breaking it. Washington gave his consent, and with some of his officers attended to see the horse receive his first lesson. After much preparation, the pretender to equitation mounted into the saddle and was making a great display of his science, when the horse suddenly planted his forefeet, threw up his heels, and gave the unlucky Gambado a somerset over his head. Washington, a thorough horseman, and quick to perceive the ludicrous in these matters, was so convulsed with laughter, that, we are told, the tears ran down his cheeks.<sup>2</sup>

Still another instance is given, which occurred at the return of peace, when he was sailing in a boat on the Hudson, and was so overcome by the drollery of a story told by Major Fairlie of New York, of facetious memory, that he fell back in the boat in a paroxysm of laughter. In that fit of laughter, it was sagely presumed that he threw off the burden of care which had been weighing down his spirits throughout the war.

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<sup>1</sup> This sportive occurrence gave rise to a piece of camp scandal. It was reported at a distance that Mrs. Olney had been in a violent rage, and had told Washington that, "if he did not let go her hand she would tear his eyes out, and that though he was a general, he was but a man."

Mr. Olney wrote to Colonel Tilghman, begging him to refute the scandal. The latter gave a true statement of the affair, declaring that the whole was done in jest, and that in the mock contest Mrs. Olney had made use of no expressions unbecoming a lady of her good breeding, or such as were taken the least amiss by the general.

<sup>2</sup> Notes of the Rev. Mr. Tuttle. MS.

He certainly relaxed much of his thoughtful gravity of demeanor when he had no longer the anxieties of a general command to harass him. The late Judge Brooke, who had served as an officer in the legion of Light-horse Harry, used to tell of having frequently met Washington on his visits to Fredericksburg after the Revolutionary war, and how "hilarious" the general was on those occasions with "Jack Willis, and other friends of his young days," laughing heartily at the comic songs which were sung at table.

Colonel Henry Lee, too, who used to be a favored guest at Mount Vernon, does not seem to have been much under the influence of that "reverential awe" which Washington is said to have inspired, if we may judge from the following anecdote. Washington one day at table mentioned his being in want of carriage horses, and asked Lee if he knew where he could get a pair.

"I have a fine pair, general," replied Lee, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?"

"Because you will never pay more than half price for any thing; and I must have full price for my horses."

The bantering reply set Mrs. Washington laughing, and her parrot, perched beside her, joined in the laugh. The general took this familiar assault upon his dignity in great good part. "Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow," said he, — "see, that bird is laughing at you."<sup>1</sup>

Hearty laughter, however, was rare with Washington. The sudden explosions we hear of were the result of some sudden and ludicrous surprise. His general habit was a calm seriousness, easily softening into a benevolent smile.

**NOTE.** — Another instance is on record of one of Washington's fits of laughter, which occurred in subsequent years. Judge Marshall and Judge Washington, a relative of the general, were on their way on horseback to visit Mount Vernon, attended by a black servant, who had charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes. As they passed through a wood in the skirts of the Mount Vernon grounds, they were tempted to make a hasty toilet beneath its shade; being covered with dust from the state of the roads. Dis-mounting, they threw off their dusty garments, while the servant took down the portmanteau. As he opened it, out flew cakes of Windsor soap and fancy articles of all kinds. The man by mistake had changed their portmanteau at the last stopping place for one which resembled it, belonging to a Scotch pedler. The consternation of the negro, and their own dismantled state, struck them so ludicrously as to produce loud and repeated bursts of laughter. Washington, who happened to be out upon the grounds, was attracted by the noise, and so overcome by the strange plight of his friends, and the whimsicality of the whole scene, that he is said to have actually rolled on the grass with laughter. — See *Life of Judge J. Smith*.

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<sup>1</sup> Communicated to us in a letter from a son of Colonel Lee.

In some few of his familiar letters, yet preserved, and not relating to business, there is occasionally a vein of pleasantry and even of humor; but almost invariably they treat of matters of too grave import to admit of any thing of the kind. It is to be deeply regretted that most of his family letters have been purposely destroyed.

The passion for hunting had revived with Washington on returning to his old hunting-grounds; but he had no hounds. His kennel had been broken up when he went to the wars, and the dogs given away, and it was not easy to replace them. After a time he received several hounds from France, sent out by Lafayette and other of the French officers, and once more sallied forth to renew his ancient sport. The French hounds, however, proved indifferent; he was out with them repeatedly, putting other hounds with them borrowed from gentlemen of the neighborhood. They improved after a while, but were never staunch, and caused him frequent disappointments. Probably he was not as staunch himself as formerly; an interval of several years may have blunted his keenness, if we may judge from the following entry in his diary:

“Out after breakfast with my hounds, found a fox and ran him sometimes hard, and sometimes at cold hunting from 11 till near 2 — when I came home and left the huntsmen with them, who followed in the same manner two hours or more, and then took the dogs off without killing.”

He appears at one time to have had an idea of stocking part of his estate with deer. In a letter to his friend, George William Fairfax, in England, a letter expressive of kind recollections of former companionship, he says: “Though envy is no part of my composition, yet the picture you have drawn of your present habitation and mode of living, is enough to create a strong desire in me to be a participator of the tranquillity and rural amusements you have described. I am getting into the latter as fast as I can, being determined to make the remainder of my life easy, let the world or the affairs of it go as they may. I am not a little obliged to you for contributing to this, by procuring me a buck and doe of the best English deer; but if you have not already been at this trouble, I would, my good sir, now wish to relieve you from it, as Mr. Ogle of Maryland has been so obliging as to present me six fawns from his park of English deer at Bellair. With these, and tolerable care, I shall soon have a full stock for my small paddock.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George William Fairfax resided in Bath, where he died on the 3d of April, 1787, in the sixty-third year of his age. Though his income was greatly reduced by the confiscation of his property in Virginia, he contributed generously during the Revolutionary war to the relief of American prisoners. — *Sparks' Washington's Writings*, v. ii. p. 53.

While Washington was thus calmly enjoying himself, came a letter from Henry Lee, who was now in Congress, conveying a mournful piece of intelligence: "Your friend and second, the patriot and noble Greene, is no more. Universal grief reigns here." Greene died on the 18th of June, at his estate of Mulberry Grove, on Savannah River, presented to him by the State of Georgia. His last illness was brief, caused by a stroke of the sun; he was but forty-four years of age.

The news of his death struck heavily on Washington's heart, to whom, in the most arduous trials of the Revolution, he had been a second self. He had taken Washington as his model, and possessed naturally many of his great qualities. Like him, he was sound in judgment; persevering in the midst of discouragements; calm and self-possessed in time of danger; heedful of the safety of others; heedless of his own. Like him, he was modest and unpretending, and like him he had a perfect command of temper.

He had Washington's habits of early rising, and close and methodical despatch of business, "never suffering the day to crowd upon the morrow." In private intercourse he was frank, noble, candid and intelligent; in the hurry of business he was free from petulance, and had, we are told, "a winning blandness of manner that won the affections of his officers."

His campaigns in the Carolinas showed him to be a worthy disciple of Washington, keeping the war alive by his own persevering hope and inexhaustible energy, and, as it were, fighting almost without weapons. His great contest of generalship with the veteran Cornwallis, has insured for him a lasting renown.

"He was a great and good man!" was Washington's comprehensive eulogy on him; and in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Greene's death is an event which has given such general concern, and is so much regretted by his numerous friends, that I can scarce persuade myself to touch upon it, even so far as to say that in him you lost a man who affectionately regarded, and was a sincere admirer of you."<sup>1</sup>

Other deaths pressed upon Washington's sensibility about the same time. That of General McDougall, who had served his country faithfully through the war, and since with equal fidelity in Congress. That, too, of Colonel Tench Tilghman,

for a long time one of Washington's aides-de-camp, and "who left," writes he, "as fair a reputation as ever belonged to a human character." "Thus," adds he, "some of the pillars of the Revolution fall. Others are mouldering by insensible degrees. May our country never want props to support the glorious fabric!"

In his correspondence about this time with several of the French noblemen who had been his associates in arms, his letters breathe the spirit of peace which was natural to him; for war with him had only been a matter of patriotism and public duty. To the Marquis de la Rouerie, who had so bravely but modestly fought under the title of Colonel Armand, he writes: "I never expect to draw my sword again. I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it. My time is now occupied by rural amusements in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is (although it is against the profession of arms, and would clip the wings of some of our young soldiers who are soaring after glory) to see the whole world in peace, and the inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind."

So, also, in a letter to Count Rochambeau, dated July 31, 1786: "It must give pleasure," writes he, "to friends of humanity, even in this distant section of the globe, to find that the clouds which threatened to burst in a storm of war on Europe have dissipated, and left a still brighter horizon. . . . As the rage of conquest, which in times of barbarity stimulated nations to blood, has in a great measure ceased; as the objects which formerly gave birth to wars are daily diminishing; and as mankind are becoming more enlightened and humanized, I cannot but flatter myself with the pleasing prospect, that a more liberal policy and more pacific systems will take place amongst them. To indulge this idea affords a soothing consolation to a philanthropic mind; insomuch that, although it should be found an illusion, one would hardly wish to be divested of an error so grateful in itself and so innocent in its consequences."

And in another letter,—"It is thus, you see, my dear Count, in retirement upon my farm I speculate upon the fate of nations, amusing myself with innocent reveries that mankind will one day grow happier and better."

How easily may the wisest of men be deceived in their speculations as to the future, especially when founded on the idea of the perfectibility of human nature. These halcyon

dreams of universal peace were indulged on the very eve, as it were, of the French Revolution, which was to deluge the world in blood, and when the rage for conquest was to have unbounded scope under the belligerent sway of Napoleon.

## CHAPTER XI.

WASHINGTON DOUBTS THE SOLIDITY OF THE CONFEDERATION — CORRESPONDENCE WITH JOHN JAY ON THE SUBJECT — PLAN OF A CONVENTION OF ALL THE STATES TO REVISE THE FEDERAL SYSTEM — WASHINGTON HEADS THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION — INSURRECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS — THE CONVENTION — A FEDERAL CONSTITUTION ORGANIZED — RATIFIED.

From his quiet retreat of Mount Vernon, Washington, though ostensibly withdrawn from public affairs, was watching with intense solicitude the working together of the several parts in the great political confederacy; anxious to know whether the thirteen distinct States, under the present organization, could form a sufficiently efficient general government. He was daily becoming more and more doubtful of the solidity of the fabric he had assisted to raise. The form of confederation which had bound the States together and met the public exigencies during the Revolution, when there was a pressure of external danger, was daily proving more and more incompetent to the purposes of a national government. Congress had devised a system of credit to provide for the national expenditure and the extinction of the national debts, which amounted to something more than forty millions of dollars. The system experienced neglect from some States and opposition from others; each consulting its local interests and prejudices, instead of the interests and obligations of the whole. In like manner treaty stipulations, which bound the good faith of the whole, were slighted, if not violated by individual States, apparently unconscious that they must each share in the discredit thus brought upon the national name.

In a letter to James Warren, who had formerly been President of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, Washington writes: "The confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance, and Congress a nugatory body; their ordinances being little attended to. To me it is a solecism in politics; indeed, it is one of the most extraordi-



nary things in nature, that we should confederate as a nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation (who are creatures of our own making, appointed for a limited and short duration, and who are amenable for every action and may be recalled at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing) sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness.”<sup>1</sup>

Not long previous to the writing of this letter, Washington had been visited at Mount Vernon by commissioners, who had been appointed by the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland to form a compact relative to the navigation of the rivers Potomac and Pocomoke, and of part of the Chesapeake Bay, and who had met at Alexandria for the purpose. During their visit at Mount Vernon, the policy of maintaining a naval force on the Chesapeake, and of establishing a tariff of duties on imports to which the laws of both States should conform, was discussed, and it was agreed, that the commissioners should propose to the governments of their respective States the appointment of other commissioners, with powers to make conjoint arrangements for the above purposes; to which the assent of Congress was to be solicited.

The idea of conjoint arrangements between States, thus suggested in the quiet councils of Mount Vernon, was a step in the right direction, and will be found to lead to important results.

From a letter, written two or three months subsequently, we gather some of the ideas on national policy which were occupying Washington's mind. “I have ever been a friend to adequate powers in Congress, without which it is evident to me we never shall establish a national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe. — We are either a united people under one head and for federal purposes, or we are thirteen independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other. — If the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the constitution points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should, in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority. — I can foresee no evil

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks, ix. 139.

greater than disunion; than those *unreasonable* jealousies (I say unreasonable, because I would have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils for the prevention of real ones."<sup>1</sup>

An earnest correspondence took place some months subsequently between Washington and the illustrious patriot, John Jay, at that time Secretary of Foreign Affairs, wherein the signs of the times were feelingly discussed.

"Our affairs," writes Jay, "seem to lead to some crisis, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, more so than during the war. Then we had a fixed object, and though the means and time of obtaining it were problematical, yet I did firmly believe that we should ultimately succeed, because I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them. . . . What I most fear is, that the better kind of people, by which I mean the people who are orderly and industrious, who are content with their situations, and not uneasy in their circumstances, will be led by the insecurity of property, the loss of public faith and rectitude, to consider the charms of liberty as imaginary and delusive. A state of uncertainty and fluctuation must disgust and alarm." Washington, in reply, coincided in opinion that public affairs were drawing rapidly to a crisis, and he acknowledged the event to be equally beyond his foresight. "We have errors," said he, "to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging, somewhere, a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not

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<sup>1</sup> See Letter to James McHenry. Sparks, ix. 121.

their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointments must they not mingle frequently with the mass of the citizens? Is it not rather to be apprehended, if they were not possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously, for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it; perfection falls not to the share of mortals.

“What then is to be done? things cannot go on in the same strain forever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. . . . I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems, founded on the basis of equal liberty, are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

“Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on the sea of troubles.

“Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight in the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy, in a most solemn manner. I then perhaps had some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present.”

His anxiety on this subject was quickened by accounts of discontents and commotions in the Eastern States produced by the pressure of the times, the public and private indebtedness, and the imposition of heavy taxes, at a moment of financial embarrassment.

General Knox, now Secretary at War, who had been sent by Congress to Massachusetts to inquire into these troubles, thus writes about the insurgents: “Their creed is that the property of the United States has been protected from the confiscation of Britain by the joint exertions of *all*, and therefore ought to be

*the common property of all*, and he that attempts opposition to this creed, is an enemy to equity and justice, and ought to be swept from off the face of the earth." Again: "They are determined to annihilate all debts, public and private, and have agrarian laws, which are easily effected by the means of unfunded paper, which shall be a tender in all cases whatever."

In reply to Colonel Henry Lee in Congress, who had addressed several letters to him on the subject, Washington writes: "You talk, my good sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found, or, if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for the disorders. *Influence is not government*. Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once. There is a call for decision. Know precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them, if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it at the moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, *all* will be convinced that the superstructure is bad and wants support. To delay one or other of these expedients, is to exasperate on the one hand, or to give confidence on the other. . . . Let the reins of government, then, be braced and held with a steady hand, and every violation of the constitution be reprehended. If defective, let it be amended; but not suffered to be trampled upon whilst it has an existence."

A letter to him from his former aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, dated New Haven, November 1, says: "The troubles in Massachusetts still continue. Government is prostrated in the dust, and it is much to be feared that there is not energy enough in that State to re-establish the civil powers. The leaders of the mob, whose fortunes and measures are desperate, are strengthening themselves daily; and it is expected that they will soon take possession of the Continental magazine at Springfield, in which there are from ten to fifteen thousand stand of arms in excellent order.

"A general want of compliance with the requisitions of Congress for money seems to prognosticate that we are rapidly advancing to a crisis. Congress, I am told, are seriously alarmed, and hardly know which way to turn or what to expect. Indeed, my dear General, nothing but a good Providence can extricate us from the present convulsion.

"In case of civil discord, I have already told you it was seriously my opinion that you could not remain neuter, and

that you would be obliged, in self-defence, to take one part or the other, or withdraw from the continent. Your friends are of the same opinion."

Close upon the receipt of this letter, came intelligence that the insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress which had been offered by their general court, were still acting in open violation of law and government; and that the chief magistrate had been obliged to call upon the militia of the State to support the constitution.

"What, gracious God! is man," writes Washington, "that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It was but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live; constitutions of our own choice and making; and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realize it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream."

His letters to Knox show the trouble of his mind. "I feel, my dear General Knox, infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these States. Good God! who, besides a tory, could have foreseen, or a Briton predicted them? I do assure you that, even at this moment, when I reflect upon the present prospect of our affairs, it seems to me to be like the vision of a dream. . . . After what I have seen, or rather what I have heard, I shall be surprised at nothing; for, if three years since, any person had told me that there would have been such a formidable rebellion as exists at this day against the laws and constitution of our own making, I should have thought him a bedlamite, a fit subject for a madhouse. . . . In regretting, which I have often done with the keenest sorrow, the death of our much lamented friend, General Greene, I have accompanied it of late with a query, whether he would not have preferred such an exit, to the scenes which, it is more than probable, many of his compatriots may live to bemoan."

To James Madison, also, he writes in the same strain. "How melancholy is the reflection, that in so short a time we should have made such large strides towards fulfilling the predictions of our transatlantic foes! 'Leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.' Will not the wise and good strive hard to avert this evil? Or will their supineness suffer ignorance and the arts of self-interested and designing, disaffected and desperate characters, to involve this great

country in wretchedness and contempt? What stronger evidence can be given of the want of energy in our government than these disorders? If there is not power in it to check them, what security has a man for life, liberty, or property? To you, I am sure, I need not add aught on the subject. The consequences of a lax or inefficient government are too obvious to be dwelt upon. Thirteen sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the federal head, will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas, a liberal and energetic constitution, well checked and well watched, to prevent encroachments, might restore us to that degree of respectability and consequence to which we had the fairest prospect of attaining."

Thus Washington, even though in retirement, was almost unconsciously exercising a powerful influence on national affairs; no longer the soldier, he was now becoming the statesman. The opinion and counsels given in his letters were widely effective. The leading expedient for federate organization, mooted in his conferences with the commissioners of Maryland and Virginia, during their visit to Mount Vernon in the previous year, had been extended and ripened in legislative Assemblies, and ended in a plan of a convention composed of delegates from all the States, to meet in Philadelphia for the sole and express purpose of revising the federal system, and correcting its defects; the proceedings of the convention to be subsequently reported to Congress, and the several Legislatures, for approval and confirmation.

Washington was unanimously put at the head of the Virginia delegation; but for some time objected to accept the nomination. He feared to be charged with inconsistency in again appearing in a public situation, after his declared resolution to the contrary. "It will have also," said he, "a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease are so much desired by me, and so essentially necessary."<sup>1</sup> Beside, he had just avowed his intention of resigning the presidency of the Cincinnati Society, which was to hold its triennial meeting in May, in Philadelphia, and he could not appear at the same time and place on any other occasion, without giving offence to his worthy companions in arms, the late officers of the American army.

These considerations were strenuously combated, for the weight and influence of his name and counsel were felt to be all-important in giving dignity to the delegation. Two things

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Edmund Randolph, governor of Virginia.

contributed to bring him to a favorable decision: First, an insinuation that the opponents of the convention were monarchists, who wished the distractions of the country should continue, until a monarchical government might be resorted to as an ark of safety. The other was the insurrection in Massachusetts.

Having made up his mind to serve as a delegate to the convention, he went into a course of preparatory reading on history and general principles of ancient and modern confederacies. An abstract of the general principles of each, with notes of their vices or defects, exists in his own handwriting, among his papers; though it is doubted by a judicious commentator<sup>1</sup> whether it was originally drawn up by him, as several works are cited, which are written in languages that he did not understand.

Before the time arrived for the meeting of the convention, which was the second Monday in May, his mind was relieved from one source of poignant solicitude, by learning that the insurrection in Massachusetts had been suppressed with but little bloodshed, and that the principals had fled to Canada. He doubted, however, the policy of the Legislature of the State in disfranchising a large number of citizens for their rebellious conduct; thinking more lenient measures might have produced as good an effect, without entirely alienating the affections of the people from the government; beside depriving some of them of the means of gaining a livelihood.

On the 9th of May, Washington set out in his carriage from Mount Vernon to attend the convention. At Chester, where he arrived on the 13th, he was met by General Mifflin, now speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, Generals Knox and Varnum, Colonel Humphreys, and other personages of note. At Gray's Ferry the city light horse were in attendance, by whom he was escorted into Philadelphia.

It was not until the 25th of May that a sufficient number of delegates were assembled to form a quorum; when they proceeded to organize the body, and by a unanimous vote Washington was called up to the chair as President.

The following anecdote is recorded by Mr. Leigh Pierce, who was a delegate from Georgia. When the convention first opened, there were a number of propositions brought forward as great leading principles of the new government to be established. A copy of them was given to each member with an

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sparks. For this interesting document see Writings of Washington, vol. iv., Appendix, No. iv.

injunction of profound secrecy. One morning a member, by accident, dropped his copy of the propositions. It was luckily picked up by General Mifflin, and handed to General Washington, who put it in his pocket. After the debates of the day were over, and the question for adjournment was called for, Washington rose, and previous to putting the question, addressed the committee as follows: "Gentlemen, I am sorry to find that some one member of this body has been so neglectful of the secrets of the convention, as to drop in the State House a copy of their proceedings; which, by accident, was picked up and delivered to me this morning. I must entreat gentlemen to be more careful, lest our transactions get into the newspapers, and disturb the public repose by premature speculations. I know not whose paper it is, but there it is (throwing it down on the table); let him who owns it take it." At the same time he bowed, took his hat, and left the room with a dignity so severe that every person seemed alarmed. "For my part, I was extremely so," adds Mr. Pierce, "for, putting my hand in my pocket, I missed my copy of the same paper; but advancing to the table, my fears soon disappeared. I found it to be in the handwriting of another person."

Mr. Pierce found his copy at his lodgings, in the pocket of a coat which he had changed that morning. No person ever ventured to claim the anonymous paper.

We forbear to go into the voluminous proceedings of this memorable convention, which occupied from four to seven hours each day for four months; and in which every point was the subject of able and scrupulous discussion by the best talent, and noblest spirits of the country. Washington felt restrained by his situation as President, from taking a part in the debates, but his well-known opinions influenced the whole. The result was the formation of the constitution of the United States, which (with some amendments made in after years) still exists.

As the members on the last day of the session were signing the engrossed constitution, Dr. Franklin, looking towards the President's chair, at the back of which a sun was painted, observed to those persons next to him, "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at the sun behind the President, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Madison Papers, iii. 1624.



"The business being closed," says Washington in his diary (September 17), "the members adjourned to the city tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other. After which I returned to my lodgings, did some business with, and received the papers from, the secretary of the convention, and retired to meditate on the momentous work which had been executed."

"It appears to me little short of a miracle," writes he to Lafayette, "that the delegates from so many States, different from each other, as you know, in their manners, circumstances and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I such an enthusiastic, partial, or indiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real, though not radical defects. With regard to the two great points, the pivots upon which the whole machine must move, my creed is simply, First, that the general government is not invested with more powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good government; and consequently, that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of power delegated to it.

"Secondly, that these powers, as the appointment of all rulers will forever arise from, and at short, stated intervals recur to, the free suffrages of the people, are so distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches into which the general government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form, so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.

"It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed constitution, that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any government hitherto instituted among mortals."

"We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the people of America, be found on experiment less perfect than it can be made, a constitutional door is left open for its amelioration."

The constitution thus formed, was forwarded to Congress, and thence transmitted to the State Legislatures, each of which submitted it to a State convention composed of delegates chosen for that express purpose by the people. The ratification of the

instrument by nine States was necessary to carry it into effect ; and as the several State conventions would assemble at different times, nearly a year must elapse before the decisions of the requisite number could be obtained.

During this time, Washington resumed his retired life at Mount Vernon, seldom riding, as he says, beyond the limits of his own farms, but kept informed by his numerous correspondents, such as James Madison, John Jay, and Generals Knox, Lincoln and Armstrong, of the progress of the constitution through its various ordeals, and of the strenuous opposition which it met with in different quarters ; both in debate and through the press. A diversity of opinions and inclinations on the subject had been expected by him. "The various passions and motives by which men are influenced," said he, "are concomitants of fallibility, and ingrafted into our nature." Still he never had a doubt that it would ultimately be adopted ; and, in fact, the national decision in its favor was more fully and strongly pronounced than even he had anticipated.

His feelings on learning the result were expressed with that solemn and religious faith in the protection of heaven, manifested by him in all the trials and vicissitudes through which his country had passed. "We may," said he, "with a kind of pious and grateful exultation, trace the finger of Providence through those dark and mysterious events, which first induced the States to appoint a general convention, and then led them, one after another, by such steps as were best calculated to effect the object, into an adoption of the system recommended by the general convention ; thereby, in all human probability, laying a lasting foundation for tranquillity and happiness, when we had but too much reason to fear that confusion and misery were coming rapidly upon us."<sup>1</sup>

The testimonials of ratification having been received by Congress from a sufficient number of States, an act was passed by that body on the 13th of September, appointing the first Wednesday in January, 1789, for the people of the United States to choose electors of a President according to the constitution, and the first Wednesday in the month of February following for the electors to meet and make a choice. The meeting of the government was to be on the first Wednesday in March, and in the city of New York.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, 20th July, 1788.

## CHAPTER XII.

WASHINGTON TALKED OF FOR THE PRESIDENCY — HIS LETTERS ON THE SUBJECT EXPRESSING HIS RELUCTANCE — HIS ELECTION — HIS PROGRESS TO THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT — HIS RECEPTION AT NEW YORK — THE INAUGURATION.

THE adoption of the Federal constitution was another epoch in the life of Washington. Before the official forms of an election could be carried into operation, a unanimous sentiment throughout the Union pronounced him the nation's choice to fill the presidential chair. He looked forward to the possibility of his election with characteristic modesty and unfeigned reluctance; as his letters to his confidential friends bear witness. "It has no fascinating allurements for me," writes he to Lafayette. "At my time of life and under my circumstances, the increasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement do not permit me to entertain a wish beyond that of living and dying an honest man on my own farm. Let those follow the pursuits of ambition and fame who have a keener relish for them, or who may have more years in store for the enjoyment."

Colonel Henry Lee had written to him warmly and eloquently on the subject. "My anxiety is extreme that the new government may have an auspicious beginning. To effect this and to perpetuate a nation formed under your auspices, it is certain that again you will be called forth. The same principles of devotion to the good of mankind which have invariably governed your conduct, will no doubt continue to rule your mind, however opposite their consequences may be to your repose and happiness. If the same success should attend your efforts on this important occasion which has distinguished you hitherto, then to be sure you will have spent a life which Providence rarely, if ever, gave to the lot of one man. It is my belief, it is my anxious hope, that this will be the case."

"The event to which you allude may never happen," replies Washington. "This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definite and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is to continue in the enjoyment of it solely until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so can-

didly disposed as to believe me uninfluenced by sinister motives, in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed to myself indispensable.

“Should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reason and opinions of my friends; might I not, after the declarations I have made (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart), in the judgment of the impartial world and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require, that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue.

“While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country and myself, I should despise all the party clamor and unjust censure, which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude.

“If I declined the task, it would lie upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief, that some other person, who had less pretence and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself.”

In a letter to Colonel Alexander Hamilton he writes: “In taking a survey of the subject, in whatever point of light I have been able to place it, I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must ere long, be called upon to make a

decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion, though I have little expectation it would gain credit from those who are less acquainted with me, that, if I should receive the appointment, and, if I should be prevailed upon to accept it, the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance than ever I experienced before in my life. It would be, however, with a fixed and sole determination of lending whatever assistance might be in my power to promote the public weal, in hopes that, at a convenient and early period, my services might be dispensed with, and that I might be permitted once more to retire, to pass an unclouded evening, after the stormy day of life, in the bosom of domestic tranquillity."

To Lafayette he declares that his difficulties increase and multiply as he draws toward the period when, according to common belief, it will be necessary for him to give a definitive answer as to the office in question.

"Should circumstances render it in a manner inevitably necessary to be in the affirmative," writes he, "I shall assume the task with the most unfeigned reluctance, and with a real diffidence, for which I shall probably receive no credit from the world. If I know my own heart, nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs; and in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavors shall be unremittingly exerted, even at the hazard of former fame or present popularity, to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit; and to establish a general system of policy, which if pursued will insure permanent felicity to the commonwealth. I think I see a path clear and direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but harmony, honesty, industry, and frugality, are necessary to make us a great and happy people. Happily the present posture of affairs, and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen, promise to co-operate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity."

The election took place at the appointed time, and it was soon ascertained that Washington was chosen President for the term of four years from the 4th of March. By this time the arguments and entreaties of his friends, and his own convictions of public expediency, had determined him to accept; and he made preparations to depart for the seat of government, as soon as he should receive official notice of his election. Among other duties, he paid a visit to his mother at Fredericksburg; it was a painful, because likely to be a final one, for she was

afflicted with a malady which, it was evident, must soon terminate her life. Their parting was affectionate, but solemn; she had always been reserved and moderate in expressing herself in regard to the successes of her son; but it must have been a serene satisfaction at the close of her life to see him elevated by his virtues to the highest honor of his country.

From a delay in forming a quorum of Congress the votes of the electoral college were not counted until early in April, when they were found to be unanimous in favor of Washington. "The delay," said he, in a letter to General Knox, "may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you (with the *world* it would obtain little credit), that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit, who is going to the place of his execution; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities and inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking the voice of the people, and a good name of my own, on this voyage; but what returns will be made for them, heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men; for of the consolations, which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

At length, on the 14th of April, he received a letter from the president of Congress, duly notifying him of his election; and he prepared to set out immediately for New York, the seat of government. An entry in his diary, dated the 16th, says, "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

At the first stage of his journey a trial of his tenderest feelings awaited him in a public dinner given him at Alexandria, by his neighbors and personal friends, among whom he had lived in the constant interchange of kind offices, and who were so aware of the practical beneficence of his private character. A deep feeling of regret mingled with their festivity. The mayor, who presided, and spoke the sentiments of the people of Alexandria, deplored in his departure the loss of the first and best of their citizens, the ornament of the aged, the model

of the young, the improver of their agriculture; the friend of their commerce, the protector of their infant academy, the benefactor of their poor, — but “go,” added he, “and make a grateful people happy, who will be doubly grateful when they contemplate this new sacrifice for their interests.”

Washington was too deeply affected for many words in reply. “Just after having bade adieu to my domestic connections,” said he, “this tender proof of your friendship is but too well calculated to awaken still further my sensibility, and increase my regret at parting from the enjoyments of private life. All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the care of that beneficent Being, who, on a former occasion, happily brought us together after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. But words fail me. Unutterable sensations must, then, be left to more expressive silence, while from an aching heart I bid all my affectionate friends and kind neighbors farewell!”

His progress to the seat of government was a continual ovation. The ringing of bells and roaring of cannonry proclaimed his course through the country. The old and young, women and children, thronged the highways to bless and welcome him. Deputations of the most respectable inhabitants from the principal places came forth to meet and escort him. At Baltimore, on his arrival and departure, his carriage was attended by a numerous cavalcade of citizens, and he was saluted by the thunder of artillery.

At the frontier of Pennsylvania he was met by his former companion in arms, Mifflin, now governor of the State, who with Judge Peters and a civil and military escort, was waiting to receive him. Washington had hoped to be spared all military parade, but found it was not to be evaded. At Chester, where he stopped to breakfast, there were preparations for a public entrance into Philadelphia. Cavalry had assembled from the surrounding country; a superb white horse was led out for Washington to mount, and a grand procession set forward, with General St. Clair of Revolutionary notoriety at its head. It gathered numbers as it advanced; passed under triumphal arches intertwined with laurel, and entered Philadelphia amid the shouts of the multitude.

A day of public festivity succeeded, ended by a display of fireworks. Washington's reply to the congratulations of the mayor at a great civic banquet, spoke the genuine feelings of his modest nature, amid these testimonials of a world's applause. “When I contemplate the interposition of Provi-

dence, as it was visibly manifested in guiding us through the Revolution, in preparing us for the reception of the general government, and in conciliating the good-will of the people of America towards one another after its adoption, I feel myself oppressed and almost overwhelmed with a sense of Divine munificence. I feel that nothing is due to my personal agency in all those wonderful and complicated events, except what can be attributed to an honest zeal for the good of my country."

We question whether any of these testimonials of a nation's gratitude affected Washington more sensibly than those he received at Trenton. It was on a sunny afternoon when he arrived on the banks of the Delaware, where, twelve years before, he had crossed in darkness and storm, through clouds of snow and drifts of floating ice, on his daring attempt to strike a blow at a triumphant enemy.

Here at present all was peace and sunshine, the broad river flowed placidly along, and crowds awaited him on the opposite bank, to hail him with love and transport.

We will not dwell on the joyous ceremonials with which he was welcomed, but there was one too peculiar to be omitted. The reader may remember Washington's gloomy night on the banks of the Assumpink, which flows through Trenton; the camp fires of Cornwallis in front of him; the Delaware full of floating ice in the rear; and his sudden resolve on the midnight retreat which turned the fortunes of the campaign. On the bridge crossing that eventful stream, the ladies of Trenton had caused a triumphal arch to be erected. It was intertwined with evergreens and laurels, and bore the inscription, "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the daughters." At this bridge the matrons of the city were assembled to pay him reverence; and as he passed under the arch, a number of young girls, dressed in white and crowned with garlands, strewed flowers before him, singing an ode expressive of their love and gratitude. Never was ovation more graceful, touching and sincere; and Washington, tenderly affected, declared that the impression of it on his heart could never be effaced.

His whole progress through New Jersey, must have afforded a similar contrast to his weary marchings to and fro, harassed by doubts and perplexities, with bale fires blazing on its hills, instead of festive illuminations, and when the ringing of bells and booming of cannon, now so joyous, were the signals of invasion and maraud.

In respect to his reception at New York, Washington had signified in a letter to Governor Clinton, that none could be so



congenial to his feelings as a quiet entry devoid of ceremony; but his modest wishes were not to be complied with. At Elizabethtown Point, a committee of both Houses of Congress, with various civic functionaries, waited by appointment to receive him. He embarked on board of a splendid barge, constructed for the occasion. It was manned by thirteen branch pilots, masters of vessels, in white uniforms, and commanded by Commodore Nicholson. Other barges fancifully decorated followed, having on board the heads of departments and other public officers, and several distinguished citizens. As they passed through the strait between the Jerseys and Staten Island, called the Kills, other boats decorated with flags fell in their wake, until the whole, forming a nautical procession, swept up the broad and beautiful bay of New York, to the sound of instrumental music. On board of two vessels were parties of ladies and gentlemen who sang congratulatory odes as Washington's barge approached. The ships at anchor in the harbor, dressed in colors, fired salutes as it passed. One alone, the *Galveston*, a Spanish man-of-war, displayed no signs of gratulation, until the barge of the general was nearly abreast; when suddenly as if by magic, the yards were manned, the ship burst forth, as it were, into a full array of flags and signals, and thundered a salute of thirteen guns.

He approached the landing place of Murray's Wharf, amid the ringing of bells, the roaring of cannonry, and the shouting of multitudes collected on every pier-head. On landing, he was received by Governor Clinton. General Knox, too, who had taken such affectionate leave of him on his retirement from military life, was there to welcome him in his civil capacity. Other of his fellow-soldiers of the Revolution were likewise there, mingled with the civic dignitaries. At this juncture, an officer stepped up and requested Washington's orders, announcing himself as commanding his guard. Washington desired him to proceed according to the directions he might have received in the present arrangements, but that for the future the affection of his fellow-citizens was all the guard he wanted.

Carpets had been spread to a carriage prepared to convey him to his destined residence, but he preferred to walk. He was attended by a long civil and military train. In the streets through which he passed the houses were decorated with flags, silken banners, garlands of flowers and evergreens, and bore his name in every form of ornament. The streets were crowded with people, so that it was with difficulty a passage could be

made by the city officers. Washington frequently bowed to the multitude as he passed, taking off his hat to the ladies, who thronged every window, waving their handkerchiefs, throwing flowers before him, and many of them shedding tears of enthusiasm.

That day he dined with his old friend Governor Clinton, who had invited a numerous company of public functionaries and foreign diplomatists to meet him, and in the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated.

Would the reader know the effect upon Washington's mind of this triumphant entry into New York? It was to depress rather than to excite him. Modestly diffident of his abilities to cope with the new duties on which he was entering, he was overwhelmed by what he regarded as proofs of public expectation. Noting in his diary the events of the day, he writes: "The display of boats which attended and joined us on this occasion, some with vocal and some with instrumental music on board; the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people which rent the skies, as I passed along the wharves, fitted my mind with sensations as painful (considering the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) as they are pleasing."

The inauguration was delayed for several days, in which a question arose as to the form or title by which the President elect was to be addressed; and a committee in both Houses was appointed to report upon the subject. The question was stated without Washington's privity, and contrary to his desire; as he feared that any title might awaken the sensitive jealousy of republicans, at a moment when it was all-important to conciliate public good-will to the new form of government. It was a relief to him, therefore, when it was finally resolved that the address should be simply "the President of the United States," without any addition of title; a judicious form which has remained to the present day. 81789-WA

The inauguration took place on the 30th of April. At nine o'clock in the morning, there were religious services in all the churches, and prayers put up for the blessing of Heaven on the new government. At twelve o'clock the city troops paraded before Washington's door, and soon after the committees of Congress and heads of departments came in their carriages. At half-past twelve the procession moved forward, preceded by the troops, next came the committees and heads of departments in their carriages; then Washington in a coach of state, his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, and his secretary, Mr.

Lear, in his own carriage. The foreign ministers and a long train of citizens brought up the rear.

About two hundred yards before reaching the hall, Washington and his suite alighted from their carriages, and passed through the troops, who were drawn up on each side, into the hall and senate chamber, where the Vice-President, the Senate and House of Representatives were assembled. The Vice-President, John Adams, recently inaugurated, advanced and conducted Washington to a chair of state at the upper end of the room. A solemn silence prevailed; when the Vice-President rose, and informed him that all things were prepared for him to take the oath of office required by the constitution.

The oath was to be administered by the Chancellor of the State of New York, in a balcony in front of the senate chamber, and in full view of an immense multitude occupying the street, the windows, and even roofs of the adjacent houses. The balcony formed a kind of open recess, with lofty columns supporting the roof. In the centre was a table with a covering of crimson velvet, upon which lay a superbly bound Bible on a crimson velvet cushion. This was all the paraphernalia for the august scene.

All eyes were fixed upon the balcony, when, at the appointed hour, Washington made his appearance, accompanied by various public functionaries, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. He was clad in a full suit of dark-brown cloth, of American manufacture, with a steel-hilted dress sword, white silk stockings, and silver shoe-buckles. His hair was dressed and powdered in the fashion of the day, and worn in a bag and solitaire.

His entrance on the balcony was hailed by universal shouts. He was evidently moved by this demonstration of public affection. Advancing to the front of the balcony, he laid his hand upon his heart, bowed several times, and then retreated to an arm-chair near the table. The populace appeared to understand that the scene had overcome him; and were hushed at once into profound silence.

After a few moments Washington rose and again came forward. John Adams, the Vice-President, stood on his right; on his left the Chancellor of the State, Robert R. Livingston; somewhat in the rear were Roger Sherman, Alexander Hamilton, Generals Knox, St. Clair, the Baron Steuben and others.

The chancellor advanced to administer the oath prescribed by the constitution, and Mr. Otis, the secretary of the Senate, held up the Bible on its crimson cushion. The oath was read

slowly and distinctly; Washington at the same time laying his hand on the open Bible. When it was concluded, he replied solemnly, "I swear—so help me God!" Mr. Otis would have raised the Bible to his lips, but he bowed down reverently and kissed it.

The chancellor now stepped forward, waved his hand and exclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!" At this moment a flag was displayed on the cupola of the hall; on which signal there was a general discharge of artillery on the battery. All the bells in the city rang out a joyful peal, and the multitude rent the air with acclamations.

Washington again bowed to the people and returned into the senate chamber, where he delivered, to both Houses of Congress, his inaugural address, characterized by his usual modesty, moderation and good sense, but uttered with a voice deep, slightly tremulous, and so low as to demand close attention in the listeners. After this he proceeded with the whole assemblage on foot to St. Paul's church, where prayers suited to the occasion were read by Dr. Prevost, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York, who had been appointed by the Senate one of the chaplains of Congress. So closed the ceremonies of the inauguration.

The whole day was one of sincere rejoicing, and in the evening there were brilliant illuminations and fireworks.

We have been accustomed to look to Washington's private letters for the sentiments of his heart. Those written to several of his friends immediately after his inauguration, show how little he was excited by his official elevation. "I greatly fear," writes he, "that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant, and I might almost say undue praises, which they are heaping upon me at this moment, into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope unmerited, censures."

Little was his modest spirit aware that the praises so dubiously received were but the opening notes of a theme that was to increase from age to age, to pervade all lands and endure throughout all generations.

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In the volumes here concluded,<sup>1</sup> we have endeavored to narrate faithfully the career of Washington from childhood,

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV. of the original edition closed at this point.

through his early surveying expeditions in the wilderness, his diplomatic mission to the French posts on the frontier, his campaigns in the French war, his arduous trials as commander-in-chief, throughout the Revolution, the noble simplicity of his life in retirement, until we have shown him elevated to the presidential chair, by no effort of his own, in a manner against his wishes, by the unanimous vote of a grateful country.

The plan of our work has necessarily carried us widely into the campaigns of the Revolution, even where Washington was not present in person ; for his spirit pervaded and directed the whole, and a general knowledge of the whole is necessary to appreciate the sagacity, forecast, enduring fortitude, and comprehensive wisdom with which he conducted it. He himself has signified to one who aspired to write his biography, that any memoirs of his life distinct and unconnected with the history of the war, would be unsatisfactory. In treating of the Revolution, we have endeavored to do justice to what we consider its most striking characteristic ; the greatness of the object and the scantiness of the means. We have endeavored to keep in view the prevailing poverty of resources, the scandalous neglects, the squalid miseries of all kinds, with which its champions had to contend in their expeditions through trackless wildernesses, or thinly peopled regions ; beneath scorching suns or inclement skies ; their wintry marches to be traced by bloody footprints on snow and ice ; their desolate wintry encampments, rendered still more desolate by nakedness and famine. It was in the patience and fortitude with which these ills were sustained by a half-disciplined yeomanry, voluntary exiles from their homes, destitute of all the "pomp and circumstance" of war to excite them, and animated solely by their patriotism, that we read the noblest and most affecting characteristics of that great struggle for human rights. They do wrong to its moral grandeur, who seek by commonplace exaggeration, to give a melodramatic effect and false glare to its military operations, and to place its greatest triumphs in the conflicts of the field. Lafayette showed a true sense of the nature of the struggle, when Napoleon, accustomed to effect ambitious purposes by hundreds of thousands of troops, and tens of thousands of slain, sneered at the scanty armies of the American Revolution and its "boasted allies." "Sire," was the admirable and comprehensive reply, "it was the grandest of causes won by skirmishes of sentinels and outposts."

In regard to the character and conduct of Washington, we have endeavored to place his deeds in the clearest light, and

left them to speak for themselves, generally avoiding comment or eulogium. We have quoted his own words and writings largely, to explain his feelings and motives, and give the true key to his policy; for never did man leave a more truthful mirror of his heart and mind, and a more thorough exponent of his conduct, than he has left in his copious correspondence. There his character is to be found in all its majestic simplicity, its massive grandeur, and quiet colossal strength. He was no hero of romance; there was nothing of romantic heroism in his nature. As a warrior, he was incapable of fear, but made no merit of defying danger. He fought for a cause, but not for personal renown. Gladly, when he had won the cause, he hung up his sword, never again to take it down. Glory, that blatant word, which haunts some military minds like the bray of the trumpet, formed no part of his aspirations. To act justly was his instinct, to promote the public weal his constant effort, to deserve the "affections of good men" his ambition. With such qualifications for the pure exercise of sound judgment and comprehensive wisdom, he ascended the presidential chair.

There for the present we leave him. So far our work is complete, comprehending the whole military life of Washington, and his agency in public affairs, up to the formation of our Constitution. How well we have executed it, we leave to the public to determine; hoping to find it, as heretofore, far more easily satisfied with the result of our labors than we are ourselves. Should the measure of health and good spirits, with which a kind Providence has blessed us beyond the usual term of literary labor, be still continued, we may go on, and in another volume, give the presidential career and closing life of Washington. In the mean time, having found a resting-place in our task, we stay our hands, lay by our pen, and seek that relaxation and repose which gathering years require.

W. I.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT — DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN RELATIONS — WASHINGTON'S ANXIOUS POSITION — ITS DIFFICULTIES — WITHOUT CABINET OR CONSTITUTIONAL ADVISER — JOHN JAY — HAMILTON — HIS EFFICIENT SUPPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND THEORETIC DOUBTS — JAMES MADISON — KNOX — HIS CHARACTERISTICS.

THE eyes of the world were upon Washington at the commencement of his administration. He had won laurels in the field: would they continue to flourish in the cabinet? His position was surrounded by difficulties. Inexperienced in the duties of civil administration, he was to inaugurate a new and untried system of government, composed of States and people, as yet a mere experiment, to which some looked forward with buoyant confidence, — many with doubt and apprehension.

He had moreover a high-spirited people to manage, in whom a jealous passion for freedom and independence had been strengthened by war, and who might bear with impatience even the restraints of self-imposed government. The constitution which he was to inaugurate had met with vehement opposition, when under discussion in the general and State governments. Only three States, New Jersey, Delaware, and Georgia, had accepted it unanimously. Several of the most important States had adopted it by a mere majority; five of them under an expressed expectation of specified amendments or modifications; while two States, Rhode Island and North Carolina, still stood aloof.

It is true, the irritation produced by the conflict of opinions in the general and State conventions, had, in a great measure, subsided; but circumstances might occur to inflame it anew. A diversity of opinions still existed concerning the new government. Some feared that it would have too little control over the individual States; that the political connection would prove too weak to preserve order and prevent civil strife: others, that it would be too strong for their separate independence, and would tend towards consolidation and despotism.

The very extent of the country he was called upon to govern, ten times larger than that of any previous republic, must have pressed with weight upon Washington's mind. It presented to the Atlantic a front of fifteen hundred miles, divided into

individual States, differing in the forms of their local governments, differing from each other in interests, in territorial magnitudes, in the amount of population, in manners, soils, climates and productions, and the characteristics of their several peoples.

Beyond the Alleghanies extended regions almost boundless, as yet for the most part wild and uncultivated, the asylum of roving Indians and restless, discontented white men. Vast tracts, however, were rapidly being peopled, and would soon be portioned into sections requiring local governments. The great natural outlets for the exportation of the products of this region of inexhaustible fertility, was the Mississippi; but Spain opposed a barrier to the free navigation of this river. Here was peculiar cause of solicitude. Before leaving Mount Vernon, Washington had heard that the hardy yeomanry of the far West were becoming impatient of this barrier, and indignant at the apparent indifference of Congress to their prayers for its removal. He had heard, moreover, that British emissaries were fostering these discontents, sowing the seeds of disaffection, and offering assistance to the Western people to seize on the city of New Orleans, and fortify the mouth of the Mississippi; while, on the other hand, the Spanish authorities at New Orleans were represented as intriguing to effect a separation of the Western territory from the Union, with a view or hope of attaching it to the dominion of Spain.

Great Britain, too, was giving grounds for territorial solicitude in these distant quarters by retaining possession of the Western posts, the surrender of which had been stipulated by treaty. Her plea was, that debts due to British subjects, for which by the same treaty the United States were bound, remained unpaid. This the Americans alleged was a mere pretext; the real object of their retention being the monopoly of the fur trade; and to the mischievous influence exercised by these posts over the Indian tribes, was attributed much of the hostile disposition manifested by the latter along the Western frontier.

While the brooding causes of anxiety existed at home, the foreign commerce of the Union was on a most unsatisfactory footing, and required prompt and thorough attention. It was subject to maraud, even by the corsairs of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, who captured American merchant vessels and carried their crews into slavery; no treaty having yet been made with any of the Barbary powers excepting Morocco.

To complete the perplexities which beset the new govern-



ment, the finances of the country were in a lamentable state. There was no money in the treasury. The efforts of the former government to pay or fund its debts, had failed; there was a universal state of indebtedness, foreign and domestic, and public credit was prostrate.

Such was the condition of affairs when Washington entered upon his new field of action. He was painfully aware of the difficulties and dangers of an undertaking in which past history and past experience afforded no precedents. "I walk, as it were, on untrodden ground," said he; "so many untoward circumstances may intervene in such a new and critical situation, that I shall feel an insuperable diffidence in my own abilities. I feel, in the execution of my arduous office, how much I shall stand in need of the countenance and aid of every friend to myself, of every friend to the Revolution, and of every lover of good government."<sup>1</sup>

As yet he was without the support of constitutional advisers, the departments under the new government not being organized; he could turn with confidence, however, for counsel in an emergency to John Jay, who still remained at the head of affairs, where he had been placed in 1784. He was sure of sympathy also in his old comrade, General Knox, who continued to officiate as secretary of war; while the affairs of the treasury were managed by a board, consisting of Samuel Osgood, Walter Livingston, and Arthur Lee. Among the personal friends not in office, to whom Washington felt that he could safely have recourse for aid in initiating the new government, was Alexander Hamilton. It is true, many had their doubts of his sincere adhesion to it. In the convention in Philadelphia, he had held up the British constitution as a model to be approached as nearly as possible, by blending some of the advantages of monarchy with the republican form. The form finally adopted was too low-toned for him; he feared it might prove feeble and inefficient; but he voted for it as the best attainable, advocated it in the State convention in New York, and in a series of essays, collectively known as *The Federalist*, written conjunctively with Madison and Jay; and it was mainly through his efforts as a speaker and a writer that the constitution was ultimately accepted. Still many considered him at heart a monarchist, and suspected him of being secretly bent upon bringing the existing government to the monarchical form. In this they did him injustice. He still continued, it is true, to

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Edward Rutledge.

doubt whether the republican theory would admit of a vigorous execution of the laws, but was clear that it ought to be adhered to as long as there was any chance for its success. "The idea of a perfect equality of political rights among the citizens, exclusive of all permanent or hereditary distinctions," had not hitherto, he thought, from an imperfect structure of the government, had a fair trial, and "was of a nature to engage the good wishes of every good man, whatever might be his theoretic doubts;" the endeavor, therefore, in his opinion, ought to be to give it "a better chance of success by a government more capable of energy and order."<sup>1</sup>

Washington, who knew and appreciated Hamilton's character, had implicit confidence in his sincerity, and felt assured that he would loyally aid in carrying into effect the constitution as adopted.

It was a great satisfaction to Washington, on looking round for reliable advisers at this moment, to see James Madison among the members of Congress: Madison, who had been with him in the convention, who had labored in *The Federalist*, and whose talents as a speaker, and calm, dispassionate reasoner; whose extensive information and legislative experience destined him to be a leader in the House. Highly appreciating his intellectual and moral worth, Washington would often turn to him for counsel. "I am troublesome," would he say, "but you must excuse me; ascribe it to friendship and confidence."

Knox, of whose sure sympathies we have spoken, was in strong contrast with the cool statesman just mentioned. His mind was ardent and active, his imagination vivid, as was his language. He had abandoned the military garb, but still maintained his soldier-like air. He was large in person, above the middle stature, with a full face, radiant and benignant, bespeaking his open, buoyant, generous nature. He had a sonorous voice, and sometimes talked rather grandly, flourishing his cane to give effect to his periods.<sup>2</sup> He was cordially appreciated by Washington, who had experienced his prompt and efficient talent in time of war, had considered him one of the ablest officers of the Revolution, and now looked to him as an energetic man of business, capable of giving practical advice in time of peace, and cherished for him that strong feeling of ancient companionship in toil and danger, which bound the veterans of the Revolution firmly to each other.

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's Writings, iv. 273.

<sup>2</sup> See Sullivan's Letters on Public Characters, p. 84.

## CHAPTER XIV.

WASHINGTON'S PRIVACY BESET WITH VISITS OF COMPLIMENT —  
QUERIES AS TO, THE PROPER LINE OF CONDUCT IN HIS PRESI-  
DENTIAL INTERCOURSE — OPINIONS OF ADAMS AND HAMILTON  
— JEFFERSON AS TO THE AUTHORS OF THE MINOR FORMS AND  
CEREMONIES — HIS WHIMSICAL ANECDOTE OF THE FIRST LEVEE  
— INAUGURAL BALL.

THE moment the inauguration was over, Washington was made to perceive that he was no longer master of himself or of his home. "By the time I had done breakfast," writes he, "and thence till dinner, and afterwards till bedtime, I could not get rid of the ceremony of one visit before I had to attend to another. In a word, I had no leisure to read or to answer the despatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters."

How was he to be protected from these intrusions? In his former capacity as commander-in-chief of the armies, his headquarters had been guarded by sentinels and military etiquette; but what was to guard the privacy of a popular chief magistrate?

What, too, were to be the forms and ceremonials to be adopted in the presidential mansion, that would maintain the dignity of his station, allow him time for the performance of its official duties, and yet be in harmony with the temper and feelings of the people, and the prevalent notions of equality and republican simplicity?

The conflict of opinions that had already occurred as to the form and title by which the President was to be addressed, had made him aware that every step at the outset of his career would be subject to scrutiny, perhaps cavil, and might hereafter be cited as a precedent. Looking round, therefore, upon the able men at hand, such as Adams, Hamilton, Jay, Madison, he propounded to them a series of questions as to a line of conduct proper for him to observe.

In regard to visitors, for instance, would not one day in the week be sufficient for visits of compliment, and one hour every morning (at eight o'clock for example) for visits on business?

Might he make social visits to acquaintances and public characters, not as President, but as private individual? And then as to his table — under the preceding form of government the Presidents of Congress had been accustomed to give dinners twice a week to large parties of both sexes, and invita-

tions had been so indiscriminate, that every one who could get introduced to the President, conceived he had a right to be invited to his board. The table was, therefore, always crowded with a mixed company; yet, as it was in the nature of things impracticable to invite everybody, as many offences were given as if no table had been kept.

Washington was resolved not to give general entertainments of this kind, but in his series of questions he asked whether he might not invite, informally or otherwise, six, eight, or ten official characters, including in rotation the members of both Houses of Congress, to dine with him on the days fixed for receiving company, without exciting clamors in the rest of the community.

Adams in his reply talked of chamberlains, aides-de-camp, masters of ceremony, and evinced a high idea of the presidential office and the state with which it ought to be maintained. "The office," writes he, "by its legal authority defined in the constitution, has no equal in the world excepting those only which are held by crowned heads; nor is the royal authority in all cases to be compared to it. The royal office in Poland is a mere shadow in comparison with it. The Dogeship in Venice, and the Stadtholdership in Holland, are not so much—neither dignity nor authority can be supported in human minds, collected into nations or any great numbers, without a splendor and majesty in some degree proportioned to them. The sending and receiving ambassadors is one of the most splendid and important prerogatives of sovereigns, absolute or limited, and this in our constitution is wholly in the President. If the state and pomp essential to this great department are not in a good degree preserved, it will be in vain for America to hope for consideration with foreign powers."<sup>1</sup>

According to Mr. Adams, two days in a week would be required for the receipt of visits of compliment. Persons desiring an interview with the President should make application through the minister of state. In every case the name, quality, or business of the visitor should be communicated to a chamberlain or gentleman in waiting, who should judge whom to admit, and whom to exclude. The time for receiving visits ought to be limited, as for example, from eight to nine or ten o'clock, lest the whole morning be taken up. The President might invite what official character, members of Congress, strangers, or citizens of distinction he pleased, in small parties

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<sup>1</sup> *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. viii. p. 403.

without exciting clamors; but this should always be done without formality. His private life should be at his own discretion, as to giving or receiving informal visits among friends and acquaintances; but in his official character, he should have no intercourse with society but upon public business, or at his levees. Adams, in the conclusion of his reply, ingenuously confessed that his long residence abroad might have impressed him with views of things incompatible with the present temper and feelings of his fellow-citizens; and Jefferson seems to have been heartily of the same opinion, for speaking of Adams in his *Autos*, he observes that "the glare of royalty and nobility, during his mission to England, had made him believe their fascination a necessary ingredient in government."<sup>1</sup> Hamilton, in his reply, while he considered it a primary object for the public good that the dignity of the presidential office should be supported, advised that care should be taken to avoid so high a tone in the demeanor of the occupant, as to shock the prevalent notions of equality.

The President, he thought, should hold a levee at a fixed time once a week, remain half an hour, converse cursorily on indifferent subjects with such persons as invited his attention, and then retire.

He should accept no invitations, give formal entertainments twice, or at most, four times in the year; if twice, on the anniversaries of the declaration of independence and of his inauguration: if four times, the anniversary of the treaty of alliance with France and that of the definitive treaty with Great Britain to be added.

The President on levee days to give informal invitations to family dinners; not more than six or eight to be asked at a time, and the civility to be confined essentially to members of the legislature, and other official characters:—the President never to remain long at table.

The heads of departments should, of course, have access to the President on business. Foreign ministers of some descriptions should also be entitled to it. "In Europe, I am informed," writes Hamilton, "ambassadors only have direct access to the chief magistrate. Something very near what prevails there would, in my opinion, be right. The distinction of rank between diplomatic characters requires attention, and the door of access ought not to be too wide to that class of persons. I have thought that the members of the Senate should also have

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, ix. 97.

a right of *individual* access on matters relative to the *public administration*. In England and France peers of the realm have this right. We have none such in this country, but I believe it will be satisfactory to the people to know that there is some body of men in the state who have a right of continual communication with the President. It will be considered a safeguard against secret combinations to deceive him."<sup>1</sup>

The reason alleged by Hamilton for giving the Senate this privilege, and not the Representatives, was, that in the constitution "the Senate are coupled with the President in certain executive functions, treaties, and appointments. This makes them in a degree his constitutional counsellors, and gives them a peculiar claim to the right of access."

These are the only written replies that we have before us of Washington's advisers on this subject.

Colonel Humphreys, formerly one of Washington's aides-de-camp, and recently secretary of Jefferson's legation at Paris, was at present an inmate in the Presidential mansion. General Knox was frequently there; to these Jefferson assures us, on Washington's authority, was assigned the task of considering and prescribing the minor forms and ceremonies, the etiquette, in fact, to be observed on public occasions. Some of the forms proposed by them, he adds, were adopted. Others were so highly strained that Washington absolutely rejected them. Knox was no favorite with Jefferson, who had no sympathies with the veteran soldier, and styles him "a man of parade," and Humphreys, he appears to think captivated by the ceremonials of foreign courts. He gives a whimsical account, which he had at a second or third hand, of the first levee. An antechamber and presence room were provided, and, when those who were to pay their court were assembled, the President set out, preceded by Humphreys. After passing through the antechamber, the door of the inner room was thrown open, and Humphreys entered first, calling out with a loud voice, "The President of the United States." The President was so much disconcerted with it that he did not recover in the whole time of the levee, and, when the company was gone, he said to Humphreys, "Well, you have taken me in once, but by —, you shall never take me in a second time."

This anecdote is to be taken with caution, for Jefferson was disposed to receive any report that placed the forms adopted in a disparaging point of view.

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's Works, vol. iv. p. 3.

He gives in his *Ana* a still more whimsical account on the authority of "a Mr. Brown," of the ceremonials at an inauguration ball at which Washington and Mrs. Washington presided in almost regal style. As it has been proved to be entirely incorrect, we have not deemed it worthy an insertion. A splendid ball was in fact given at the Assembly Rooms, and another by the French Minister, the Count de Moustier, at both of which Washington was present and danced; but Mrs. Washington was not at either of them, not being yet arrived, and on neither occasion were any mock regal ceremonials observed. Washington was the last man that would have tolerated any thing of the kind. Our next chapter will show the almost casual manner in which the simple formalities of the republican court originated.

## CHAPTER XV.

### JOURNEY OF MRS. WASHINGTON TO NEW YORK — HONORS PAID HER IN HER PROGRESS — RECEPTIONS AT THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT — THE PRESIDENT'S EQUIPAGE.

ON the 17th of May, Mrs. Washington, accompanied by her grandchildren, Eleanor Custis, and George Washington Parke Custis, set out from Mount Vernon in her travelling carriage with a small escort of horse, to join her husband at the seat of government; as she had been accustomed to join him at head-quarters, in the intervals of his Revolutionary campaigns.

Throughout the journey she was greeted with public testimonials of respect and affection. As she approached Philadelphia, the President of Pennsylvania and other of the State functionaries, with a number of the principal inhabitants of both sexes, came forth to meet her, and she was attended into the city by a numerous cavalcade, and welcomed with the ringing of bells and firing of cannon.

Similar honors were paid her in her progress through New Jersey. At Elizabethtown she alighted at the residence of Governor Livingston, whither Washington came from New York to meet her. They proceeded thence by water, in the same splendid barge in which the general had been conveyed for his inauguration. It was manned, as on that occasion, by thirteen master pilots, arrayed in white, and had several persons of note on board. There was a salute of thirteen guns as

the barge passed the Battery at New York. The landing took place at Peck Slip, not far from the presidential residence, amid the enthusiastic cheers of an immense multitude.

On the following day, Washington gave a demi-official dinner, of which Mr. Wingate, a senator from New Hampshire, who was present, writes as follows: "The guests consisted of the Vice-President, the foreign ministers, the heads of departments, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Senators from New Hampshire and Georgia, the then most Northern and Southern States. It was the least showy dinner that I ever saw at the President's table, and the company was not large. As there was no chaplain present, the President himself said a very short grace as he was sitting down. After dinner the dessert was finished, *one glass* of wine was passed around the table, and *no toast*. The President rose, and all the company retired to the drawing-room, from which the guests departed, as every one chose, without ceremony."

On the evening of the following day (Friday, May 29), Mrs. Washington had a general reception, which was attended by all that was distinguished in official and fashionable society. Henceforward there were similar receptions every Friday evening, from eight to ten o'clock, to which the families of all persons of respectability, native or foreign, had access, without special invitation; and at which the President was always present. These assemblages were as free from ostentation and restraint as the ordinary receptions of polite society; yet the reader will find they were soon subject to invidious misrepresentation; and cavilled at as "court-like levees" and "queenly drawing-rooms."

Beside these public receptions, the presidential family had its private circle of social intimacy; the President, moreover, was always ready to receive visits by appointment on public or private business.

The sanctity and quiet of Sunday were strictly observed by Washington. He attended church in the morning, and passed the afternoon alone in his closet. No visitors were admitted, excepting perhaps an intimate friend in the evening, which was spent by him in the bosom of his family.

The household establishment was conducted on an ample and dignified scale, but without ostentation, and regulated with characteristic system and exactness. Samuel Fraunces, once landlord of the City Tavern in Broad Street, where Washington took leave of the officers of the army in 1783, was now steward of the presidential household. He was required to render a



weekly statement of receipts and expenditures, and warned to guard against waste and extravagance. "We are happy to inform our readers," says *Fenno's Gazette* of the day, "that the President is determined to pursue that system of regularity and economy in his household which has always marked his public and private life."

In regard to the deportment of Washington at this juncture, we have been informed by one who had opportunities of seeing him, that he still retained a military air of command which had become habitual to him. At levees and drawing-rooms he sometimes appeared cold and distant, but this was attributed by those who best knew him to the novelty of his position and his innate diffidence, which seemed to increase with the light which his renown shed about him. Though reserved at times, his reserve had nothing repulsive in it, and in social intercourse, where he was no longer under the eye of critical supervision, soon gave way to soldier-like frankness and cordiality. At all times his courtesy was genuine and benignant, and totally free from the stately condescension sometimes mistaken for politeness. Nothing we are told could surpass the noble grace with which he presided at a ceremonial dinner; kindly attentive to all his guests, but particularly attentive to put those at their ease and in a favorable light, who appeared to be most diffident.

As to Mrs. Washington, those who really knew her at the time, speak of her as free from pretension or affectation; undazzled by her position, and discharging its duties with the truthful simplicity and real good-breeding of one accustomed to preside over a hospitable mansion in the "Ancient Dominion." She had her husband's predilection for private life. In a letter to an intimate she writes: "It is owing to the kindness of our numerous friends in all quarters that my new and unwished for situation is not indeed a burden to me. When I was much younger, I should probably have enjoyed the innocent gayeties of life as much as most persons of my age; but I had long since placed all the prospects of my future worldly happiness in the still enjoyments of the fireside at Mount Vernon.

"I little thought, when the war was finished, that any circumstances could possibly happen, which would call the general into public life again. I had anticipated that from that moment we should be suffered to grow old together in solitude and tranquillity. That was the first and dearest wish of my heart."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in a note to Sparks, p. 422.

Much has been said of Washington's equipages, when at New York, and of his having four, and sometimes six horses before his carriage, with servants and outriders in rich livery. Such style we would premise was usual at the time, both in England and the colonies, and had been occasionally maintained by the Continental dignitaries, and by governors of the several States, prior to the adoption of the new constitution. It was still prevalent, we are told, among the wealthy planters of the South, and sometimes adopted by "merchant princes" and rich individuals at the North. It does not appear, however, that Washington ever indulged in it through ostentation. When he repaired to the Hall of Congress, at his inauguration, he was drawn by a single pair of horses in a chariot presented for the occasion, on the panels of which were emblazoned the arms of the United States.

Beside this modest equipage there was the ample family carriage which had been brought from Virginia. To this four horses were put when the family drove out into the country, the state of the roads in those days requiring it. For the same reason six horses were put to the same vehicle on journeys, and once on a state occasion. If there was any thing he was likely to take a pride in, it was horses; he was passionately fond of that noble animal, and mention is occasionally made of four white horses of great beauty which he owned while in New York.<sup>1</sup> His favorite exercise when the weather permitted it was on horseback, accompanied by one or more of the members of his household, and he was noted always for being admirably mounted, and one of the best horsemen of his day.

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<sup>1</sup> For some of these particulars concerning Washington we are indebted to the late William A. Duer, president of Columbia College, who in his boyhood was frequently in the President's house, playmate of young Custis, Mrs. Washington's grandson.

*Washington's Residences in New York.* — The first presidential residence was at the junction of Pearl and Cherry Streets, Franklin Square. At the end of about a year, the President removed to the house on the west side of Broadway, near Rector Street, afterwards known as Bunker's Mansion House. Both of these buildings have disappeared, in the course of modern "improvements."

## CHAPTER XVI.

ALARMING ILLNESS OF THE PRESIDENT — THE SENATE REJECTS ONE OF HIS NOMINATIONS — HIS SENSITIVE VINDICATION OF IT — DEATH OF HIS MOTHER — HER CHARACTER — THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS INSTITUTED — SELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE TREASURY AND WAR DEPARTMENTS — HAMILTON INSTRUCTED TO REPORT A FINANCIAL PLAN AT THE NEXT SESSION OF CONGRESS — ARRANGEMENT OF THE JUDICIARY DEPARTMENT — EDMUND RANDOLPH — ADJOURNMENT OF CONGRESS — ITS CHARACTER, BY FISHER AMES.

As soon as Washington could command sufficient leisure to inspect papers and documents, he called unofficially upon the heads of departments to furnish him with such reports in writing as would aid him in gaining a distinct idea of the state of public affairs. For this purpose also he had recourse to the public archives, and proceeded to make notes of the foreign official correspondence from the close of the war until his inauguration. He was interrupted in his task by a virulent attack of anthrax, which for several days threatened mortification. The knowledge of his perilous condition spread alarm through the community; he, however, remained unagitated. His medical adviser was Dr. Samuel Bard, of New York, an excellent physician and most estimable man, who attended him with unremitting assiduity. Being alone one day with the doctor, Washington regarded him steadily, and asked his candid opinion as to the probable result of his case. "Do not flatter me with vain hopes," said he, with placid firmness; "I am not afraid to die, and therefore can bear the worst." The doctor expressed hope, but owned that he had apprehensions. "Whether tonight or twenty years hence, makes no difference," observed Washington. "I know that I am in the hands of a good Providence." His sufferings were intense, and his recovery was slow. For six weeks he was obliged to lie on his right side; but after a time he had his carriage so contrived that he could extend himself at full length in it, and take exercise in the open air.

While rendered morbidly sensitive by bodily pain, he suffered deep annoyance from having one of his earliest nominations, that of Benjamin Fishburn, for the place of naval officer of the port of Savannah, rejected by the Senate.

If there was any thing in which Washington was scrupulously

conscientious, it was in the exercise of the nominating power; scrutinizing the fitness of candidates; their comparative claims on account of public services, and sacrifices, and with regard to the equable distribution of offices among the States; in all which he governed himself solely by considerations for the public good. He was especially scrupulous where his own friends and connections were concerned. "So far as I know my own mind," would he say, "I would not be in the remotest degree influenced in making nominations by motives arising from the ties of family or blood."

He was principally hurt in the present instance by the want of deference on the part of the Senate, in assigning no reason for rejecting his nomination of Mr. Fishburn. He acquiesced, however, in the rejection, and forthwith sent in the name of another candidate; but at the same time administered a temperate and dignified rebuke. "Whatever may have been the reasons which induced your dissent," writes he to the Senate, "I am persuaded that they were such as you deemed sufficient. Permit me to submit to your consideration, whether, on occasions where the propriety of nominations appears questionable to you, it would not be expedient to communicate that circumstance to me, and thereby avail yourselves of the information which led me to make them, and which I would with pleasure lay before you. Probably my reasons for nominating Mr. Fishburn may tend to show that such a mode of proceeding, in such cases, might be useful. I will therefore detail them."

He then proceeds to state, that Colonel Fishburn had served under his own eye with reputation as an officer and a gentleman; had distinguished himself at the storming of Stony Point; had repeatedly been elected to the Assembly of Georgia as a representative from Chatham County, in which Savannah was situated; had been elected by the officers of the militia of that county, Lieutenant-Colonel of the militia of the district; had been member of the Executive Council of the State, and president of the same; had been appointed by the council to an office which he actually held, in the port of Savannah, nearly similar to that for which Washington had nominated him.

"It appeared therefore to me," adds Washington, "that Mr. Fishburn must have enjoyed the *confidence* of the militia officers in order to have been elected to a military rank — the *confidence* of the freemen, to have been elected to the Assembly — the *confidence* of the Assembly to have been selected for the Council, and the *confidence* of the Council to have been appointed collector of the port of Savannah."

We give this letter in some detail, as relating to the only instance in which a nomination by Washington was rejected. The reasons of the Senate for rejecting it do not appear. They seem to have felt his rebuke, for the nomination last made by him was instantly confirmed.

While yet in a state of convalescence, Washington received intelligence of the death of his mother. The event, which took place at Fredericksburg in Virginia, on the 25th of August, was not unexpected; she was eighty-two years of age, and had for some time been sinking under an incurable malady, so that when he last parted with her he had apprehended that it was a final separation. Still he was deeply affected by the intelligence; consoling himself, however, with the reflection that "Heaven had spared her to an age beyond which few attain; had favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily health as usually falls to the lot of fourscore."

Mrs. Mary Washington is represented as a woman of strong plain sense, strict integrity, and an inflexible spirit of command. We have mentioned the exemplary manner in which she, a lone widow, had trained her little flock in their childhood. The deference for her, then instilled into their minds, continued throughout life, and was manifested by Washington when at the height of his power and reputation. Eminently practical, she had thwarted his military aspirations, when he was about to seek honor in the British navy. During his early and disastrous campaigns on the frontier, she would often shake her head and exclaim, "Ah, George had better have staid at home and cultivated his farm." Even his ultimate success and renown had never dazzled, however much they may have gratified her. When others congratulated her, and were enthusiastic in his praise, she listened in silence, and would temperately reply that he had been a good son, and she believed he had done his duty as a man.

Hitherto the new government had not been properly organized, but its several duties had been performed by the officers who had them in charge at the time of Washington's inauguration. It was not until the 10th of September that laws were passed instituting a department of Foreign Affairs (afterwards termed Department of State), a Treasury department, and a department of War, and fixing their respective salaries. On the following day, Washington nominated General Knox to the department of War, the duties of which that officer had hitherto discharged.

The post of Secretary of the Treasury was one of far greater importance at the present moment. It was a time of financial exigency. As yet no statistical account of the country had been attempted; its fiscal resources were wholly unknown; its credit was almost annihilated, for it was obliged to borrow money even to pay the interest of its debts.

We have already quoted the language held by Washington in regard to this state of things before he had assumed the direction of affairs. "My endeavors shall be unremittingly exerted, even at the hazard of former fame, or present popularity, to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit."

Under all these circumstances, and to carry out these views, he needed an able and zealous coadjutor in the Treasury department; one equally solicitous with himself on the points in question, and more prepared upon them by financial studies and investigations than he could pretend to be. Such a person he considered Alexander Hamilton, whom he nominated as Secretary of the Treasury, and whose qualifications for the office were so well understood by the Senate that his nomination was confirmed on the same day on which it was made.

Within a few days after Hamilton's appointment, the House of Representatives (September 21), acting upon the policy so ardently desired by Washington, passed a resolution, declaring their opinion of the high importance to the honor and prosperity of the United States, that an adequate provision should be made for the support of public credit; and instructing the Secretary of the Treasury to prepare a plan for the purpose, and report it at their next session.

The arrangement of the Judicial department was one of Washington's earliest cares. On the 27th of September, he wrote unofficially to Edmund Randolph, of Virginia, informing him that he had nominated him Attorney-General of the United States, and would be highly gratified with his acceptance of that office. Some old recollections of the camp and of the early days of the Revolution, may have been at the bottom of this good-will, for Randolph had joined the army at Cambridge in 1775, and acted for a time as aide-de-camp to Washington in place of Mifflin. He had since gained experience in legislative business as member of Congress, from 1779 to 1782, Governor of Virginia in 1786, and delegate to the convention in 1787. In the discussions of that celebrated body, he had been opposed to a single executive, professing to discern in the unity of that power the "*foetus of monarchy*;" and preferring an execu-

tive consisting of three; whereas, in the opinion of others, this plural executive would be "a kind of Cerberus with three heads." Like Madison, he had disapproved of the equality of suffrage in the Senate, and been, moreover, of opinion, that the President should be ineligible to office after a given number of years.

Dissatisfied with some of the provisions of the constitution as adopted, he had refused to sign it; but had afterwards supported it in the State convention of Virginia. As we recollect him many years afterwards, his appearance and address were dignified and prepossessing; he had an expressive countenance, a beaming eye, and somewhat of the *ore rotundo* in speaking. Randolph promptly accepted the nomination, but did not take his seat in the cabinet until some months after Knox and Hamilton.

By the judicial system established for the Federal Government, the Supreme Court of the United States was to be composed of a chief justice and five associate judges. There were to be district courts with a judge in each State, and circuit courts held by an associate judge and a district judge. John Jay, of New York, received the appointment of Chief Justice, and in a letter enclosing his commission, Washington expressed the singular pleasure he felt in addressing him "as the head of that department which must be considered as the keystone of our political fabric."

Jay's associate judges were, John Rutledge of South Carolina, James Wilson of Pennsylvania, William Cushing of Massachusetts, John Blair of Virginia, and James Iredell of North Carolina. Washington had originally nominated to one of the judgeships his former military secretary, Robert Harrison, familiarly known as *the old Secretary*; but he preferred the office of Chancellor of Maryland, recently conferred upon him.

On the 29th of September, Congress adjourned to the first Monday in January, after an arduous session, in which many important questions had been discussed, and powers organized and distributed. The actual Congress was inferior in eloquence and shining talent to the first Congress of the Revolution; but it possessed men well fitted for the momentous work before them; sober, solid, upright, and well informed. An admirable harmony had prevailed between the legislature and the executive, and the utmost decorum had reigned over the public deliberations.

Fisher Ames, then a young man, who had acquired a brilliant reputation in Massachusetts by the eloquence with which he

had championed the new constitution in the convention of that important State, and who had recently been elected to Congress, speaks of it in the following terms: "I have never seen an assembly where so little art was used. If they wish to carry a point, it is directly declared and justified. Its merits and defects are plainly stated, not without sophistry and prejudice, but without management. . . . There is no intrigue, no caucusing, little of clannishness together, little asperity in debate, or personal bitterness out of the House."

## CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE STILL WITHOUT A HEAD — SKETCH OF JEFFERSON'S CHARACTER AND OPINIONS — DEEPLY IMMERSSED IN FRENCH POLITICS AT PARIS — GOUVERNEUR MORRIS ABROAD — CONTRAST OF HIS AND JEFFERSON'S VIEWS ON THE FRENCH CRISIS — NEWS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN AMERICA — POPULAR EXCITEMENT — WASHINGTON'S CAUTIOUS OPINION ON THE SUBJECT — HAMILTON'S APPREHENSIVE VIEW — JEFFERSON OFFERED A PLACE IN THE CABINET AS SECRETARY OF STATE.

THE cabinet was still incomplete; the department of foreign affairs, or rather of State, as it was now called, was yet to be supplied with a head. John Jay would have received the nomination had he not preferred the bench. Washington next thought of Thomas Jefferson, who had so long filled the post of minister plenipotentiary at the Court of Versailles, but had recently solicited and obtained permission to return, for a few months, to the United States for the purpose of placing his children among their friends in their native country, and of arranging his private affairs, which had suffered from his protracted absence. And here we will venture a few particulars concerning this eminent statesman, introductory to the important influence he was to exercise on national affairs.

His political principles as a democratic republican, had been avowed at an early date in his draft of the Declaration of Independence, and subsequently in the successful war which he made upon the old cavalier traditions of his native State; its laws of entails and primogeniture, and its church establishment, a war which broke down the hereditary fortunes and hereditary families, and put an end to the hereditary aristocracy of the Ancient Dominion.



Being sent to Paris as minister plenipotentiary a year or two after the peace, he arrived there, as he says, "when the American Revolution seemed to have awakened the thinking part of the French nation from the sleep of despotism in which they had been sunk."

Carrying with him his republican principles and zeal, his house became the resort of Lafayette and others of the French officers who had served in the American Revolution. They were mostly, he said, young men little shackled by habits and prejudices, and had come back with new ideas and new impressions which began to be disseminated by the press and in conversation. Politics became the theme of all societies, male and female, and a very extensive and zealous party was formed which acquired the appellation of the Patriot Party, who, sensible of the abuses of the government under which they lived, sighed for occasions of reforming it. This party, writes Jefferson, "comprehended all the honesty of the kingdom sufficiently at leisure to think, the men of letters, the easy bourgeois, the young nobility, partly from reflection, partly from the mode; for these sentiments became matter of mode, and, as such, united most of the young women to the party."

By this party Jefferson was considered high authority from his republican principles and experience, and his advice was continually sought in the great effort for political reform which was daily growing stronger and stronger. His absence in Europe had prevented his taking part in the debates on the new constitution, but he had exercised his influence through his correspondence. "I express freely," writes he, "in letters to my friends, and most particularly to Mr. Madison and General Washington, my approbations and objections."<sup>1</sup> What those approbations and objections were appears by the following citations, which are important to be kept in mind as illustrating his after conduct:

"I approved, from the first moment, of the great mass of what is in the new constitution, the consolidation of the government, the organization into executive, legislative, and judiciary; the subdivision of the legislature, the happy compromise of the interests between the great and little States, by the different manner of voting in the different Houses, the voting by persons instead of States, the qualified negative on laws given to the executive, which, however, I should have liked better if associated with the judiciary also, as in New York,

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<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography, Works, i. 79.*

and the power of taxation: what I disapproved from the first moment, was the want of a Bill of Rights to guard liberty against the legislative as well as against the executive branches of the government; that is to say, to secure freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom from monopolies, freedom from unlawful imprisonment, freedom from a permanent military, and a trial by jury in all cases determinable by the laws of the land."

What he greatly objected to was the perpetual re-eligibility of the President. "This, I fear," said he, "will make that an office for life, first, and then hereditary. I was much an enemy to monarchies before I came to Europe, and am ten thousand times more so since I have seen what they are. There is scarcely an evil known in these countries which may not be traced to their king as its source, nor a good which is not derived from the small fibres of republicanism existing among them. I can further say, with safety, there is not a crowned head in Europe whose talents or merits would entitle him to be elected a vestryman by the people of any parish in America."<sup>1</sup>

In short, such a horror had he imbibed of kingly rule, that, in a familiar letter to Colonel Humphreys, who had been his Secretary of Legation, he gives it as the duty of our young Republic "to besiege the throne of heaven with eternal prayers to extirpate from creation this class of human lions, tigers, and mammoths, called kings, from whom, let him perish who does not say, 'Good Lord, deliver us!'"

Jefferson's political fervor occasionally tended to exaltation, but it was genuine. In his excited state he regarded with quick suspicion every thing in his own country that appeared to him to have a regal tendency. His sensitiveness had been awakened by the debates in Congress as to the title to be given to the President, whether or not he should be addressed as His Highness; and had been relieved by the decision that he was to have no title but that of office, viz.: President of the United States. "I hope," said Jefferson, "the terms of Excellency, Honor, Worship, Esquire, forever disappear from among us from that moment. I wish that of Mr. would follow them."<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the re-eligibility of the President, his anxiety was quieted for the present, by the elevation of Washington to the Presidential chair. "Since the thing [re-eligibility] is

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Washington, May 2, 1788. Works, ii. 375.

<sup>2</sup> Letters to Mr. Carmichael. Works, iii. 88.

established," writes he, "I would wish it not to be altered during the lifetime of our great leader, whose executive talents are superior to those, I believe, of any man in the world, and who, alone, by the authority of his name, and the confidence reposed in his perfect integrity, is fully qualified to put the new government so under way as to secure it against the efforts of opposition. But, having derived from our error all the good there was in it, I hope we shall correct it the moment we can no longer have the same name at the helm."<sup>1</sup>

Jefferson, at the time of which we are speaking, was, as we have shown, deeply immersed in French politics and interested in the success of the "Patriot Party," in its efforts to reform the country. His despatches to government all proved how strongly he was on the side of the people. "He considered a successful reformation in France as insuring a general reformation throughout Europe, and the resurrection to a new life of their people now ground to dust by the abuses of the governing powers."

Gouverneur Morris, who was at that time in Paris on private business, gives a different view of the state of things produced by the Patriot Party. Morris had arrived in Paris on the 3d of February, 1789, furnished by Washington with letters of introduction to persons in England, France, and Holland. His brilliant talents, ready conversational powers, easy confidence in society, and striking aristocratical appearance, had given him great currency, especially in the court party and among the ancient nobility; in which direction his tastes most inclined. He had renewed his intimacy with Lafayette, whom he found "full of politics," but "too republican for the genius of his country."

In a letter to the French minister, residing in New York, Morris writes on the 23d of February, 1789: "Your nation is now in a most important crisis, and the great question — shall we hereafter have a constitution, or shall will continue to be law — employs every mind and agitates every heart in France. Even voluptuousness itself rises from its couch of roses and looks anxiously abroad at the busy scene to which nothing can now be indifferent.

"Your nobles, your clergy, your people, are all in motion for the elections. A spirit which has been dormant for generations starts up and stares about, ignorant of the means of obtaining,

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to F. Hopkinson. Works, ii. 587.

but ardently desirous to possess its object — consequently active, energetic, easily led, but also easily, too easily misled. Such is the instinctive love of freedom which now grows warm in the bosom of your country.”

When the king was constrained by the popular voice to convene the States General at Versailles for the purpose of discussing measures of reform, Jefferson was a constant attendant upon the debates of that body. “I was much acquainted with the leading patriots of the Assembly,” writes he, “being from a country which had successfully passed through similar reform; they were disposed to my acquaintance and had some confidence in me. I urged most strenuously an immediate compromise to secure what the government was now ready to yield, and trust to future occasions for what might still be wanting.”

The “leading patriots” here spoken of, were chiefly the deputies from Brittany, who, with others, formed an association called the Breton Club, to watch the matters debated in Parliament and shape the course of affairs.

Morris, speaking of Jefferson at this juncture, observes, “He and I differ in our system of politics. He, with all the leaders of liberty here, is desirous of annihilating distinctions of order. How far such views may be right, respecting mankind in general, is, I think, extremely problematical. But, with respect to this nation, I am sure it is wrong and cannot eventuate well.”<sup>1</sup>

Jefferson, in a letter to Thomas Paine (July 11), giving some account of the proceedings of the States General, observes, “The National Assembly (for that is the name they take) having shown, through every stage of these transactions, a coolness, wisdom, and resolution to set fire to the four corners of the kingdom, and to perish with it themselves rather than to relinquish an iota from their plan of a total change of government, are now in complete and undisputed possession of the Sovereignty. The executive and aristocracy are at their feet; the mass of the nation, the mass of the clergy, and the army are with them; they have prostrated the old government and are now beginning to build one from the foundation.”

It was but three days after the date of this letter that the people of Paris rose in their might, plundered the arsenal of the Invalides, furnished themselves with arms, stormed the Bastille; and a national guard, formed of the Bourgeoisie, with the tri-colored cockade for an emblem and Lafayette as commander, took Paris under its protection.

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<sup>1</sup> Life of G. Morris, 1, 313.

Information of these events was given at midnight to the king at Versailles by Rochefoucauld-Liancourt. "It is a revolt," exclaimed the king. "Sire," replied Liancourt, "*it is a revolution!*"

Jefferson, in his despatches to government, spoke with admiration of the conduct of the people throughout the violent scenes which accomplished this popular convulsion. "There was a severity of honesty observed, of which no example has been known. Bags of money, offered on various occasions through fear or guilt, have been uniformly refused by the mobs. The churches are now occupied in singing '*De Profundis*' and '*Requiems*' for the repose of the souls of the brave and valiant citizens, who have sealed, with their blood, the liberty of the nation. . . . We cannot suppose this paroxysm confined to Paris alone; the whole country must pass successively through it, and happy if they get through as soon and as well as Paris has done."<sup>1</sup>

Gouverneur Morris, writing on the same subject to Washington, on the 31st of July, observes: "You may consider the revolution as complete. The authority of the king and of the nobility is completely subdued; yet I tremble for the constitution. They have all the romantic spirit and all the romantic ideas of government, which, happily for America, we were cured of before it was too late."

The foregoing brief notices of affairs in revolutionary France, and of the feelings with which they were viewed by American statesmen resident there, will be found of service in illustrating subsequent events in the United States.

The first news of the revolution reached America in October, and was hailed by the great mass of the people with enthusiasm. Washington, in reply to his old comrade in arms, the Count de Rochambeau, observes: "I am persuaded I express the sentiments of my fellow-citizens, when I offer an earnest prayer that it may terminate in the permanent honor and happiness of your government and people."

But, in a reply of the same date (13th October) to Gouverneur Morris, he shows that his circumspect and cautious spirit was not to be hurried away by popular excitement. "The revolution which has been effected in France," writes he, "is of so wonderful a nature, that the mind can hardly realize the fact. If it ends as our last accounts of the 1st of August predict, that nation will be the most powerful and happy in Europe;

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to John Jay. Jefferson's Works, iii. 80.

but I fear, though it has gone triumphantly through the first paroxysm, it is not the last it has to encounter before matters are finally settled. In a word, the revolution is of too great a magnitude to be effected in so short a space, and with the loss of so little blood. The mortification of the king, the intrigues of the queen, and the discontent of the princes and noblesse, will foment divisions, if possible, in the National Assembly; and they will, unquestionably, avail themselves of every *faux pas* in the formation of the constitution, if they do not give a more open, active opposition. In addition to these, the licentiousness of the people on one hand, and sanguinary punishments on the other, will alarm the best disposed friends to the measure, and contribute not a little to the overthrow of their object. Great temperance, firmness, and foresight are necessary in the movements of that body. To forbear running from one extreme to another, is no easy matter: and should this be the case, rocks and shelves, not visible at present, may wreck the vessel, and give a higher-toned despotism than the one which existed before.”<sup>1</sup>

Hamilton, too, regarded the recent event in France with a mixture of pleasure and apprehension. In a letter to Lafayette he writes: “As a friend to mankind and to liberty, I rejoice in the efforts which you are making to establish it, while I fear much for the final success of the attempts, for the fate of those who are engaged in it, and for the danger, in case of success, of innovations greater than will consist with the real felicity of your nation. . . . I dread disagreements among these who are now united, about the nature of your constitution; I dread the vehement character of your people, whom, I fear, you may find it more easy to bring on, than to keep within proper bounds after you have put them in motion. I dread the interested refractoriness of your nobles, who cannot all be gratified, and who may be unwilling to submit to the requisite sacrifices. And I dread the reveries of your philosophic politicians, who appear in the moment to have great influence, and who, being mere speculatists, may aim at more refinement than suits either with human nature or the composition of your nation.”<sup>2</sup>

The opposite views and feelings of Hamilton and Jefferson, with regard to the French revolution, are the more interesting, as these eminent statesmen were soon to be brought face to face in the cabinet, the policy of which would be greatly

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<sup>1</sup> Writings of Washington, x. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton's Works, v. 440.

influenced by French affairs; for it was at this time that Washington wrote to Jefferson, offering him the situation of Secretary of State, but forbearing to nominate a successor to his post at the Court of Versailles, until he should be informed of his determination.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

WASHINGTON'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE EASTERN STATES — JOHN HANCOCK — CLASHING BETWEEN THE CIVIL AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES ON THE PRESIDENT'S ENTRY INTO BOSTON — A CONTEST OF ETIQUETTE — WASHINGTON'S ACCOUNT OF HIS ENTRY — HIS RECEPTION — A NEW PUNCTILIO — ADDRESS OF CINCINNATI SOCIETY — RETURN TO NEW YORK.

AT the time of writing the letter to Jefferson, offering him the department of State, Washington was on the eve of a journey through the Eastern States, with a view, as he said, to observe the situation of the country, and with a hope of perfectly re-establishing his health, which a series of indispositions had much impaired. Having made all his arrangements, and left the papers appertaining to the office of Foreign Affairs under the temporary superintendence of Mr. Jay, he set out from New York on the 15th of October, travelling in his carriage with four horses, and accompanied by his official secretary, Major Jackson, and his private secretary, Mr. Lear. Though averse from public parade, he could not but be deeply affected and gratified at every step by the manifestations of a people's love. Wherever he came, all labor was suspended; business neglected. The bells were rung, the guns were fired; there were civic processions and military parades and triumphal arches, and all classes poured forth to testify, in every possible manner, their gratitude and affection for the man whom they hailed as the Father of his country; and well did his noble stature, his dignified demeanor, his matured years, and his benevolent aspect, suit that venerable appellation.

On the 22d, just after entering Massachusetts, he was met by an express from the Governor of the State (the Hon. John Hancock), inviting him to make his quarters at his house while he should remain in Boston, and announcing to him that he had issued orders for proper escorts to attend him, and that the troops with the gentlemen of the Council would receive him at Cambridge and wait on him to town.

Washington, in a courteous reply, declined the Governor's invitation to his residence, having resolved, he said, on leaving New York, to accept of no invitations of the kind while on his journey, through an unwillingness to give trouble to private families. He had accordingly instructed a friend to engage lodgings for him during his stay in Boston. He was highly sensible, he observed, of the honors intended him; but, could his wishes prevail, he would desire to visit the metropolis without any parade or extraordinary ceremony. It was never Washington's good fortune, on occasions of the kind, to have his modest inclinations consulted; in the present instance they were little in accord with the habits and notions of the Governor, who, accustomed to fill public stations and preside at public assemblies, which he did with the punctilio of the old school, was strictly observant of every thing appertaining to official rank and dignity. Governor Hancock was now about fifty-two years of age, tall and thin, of a commanding deportment and graceful manner, though stooping a little and much afflicted with the gout. He was really hospitable, which his ample wealth enabled him to be, and was no doubt desirous of having Washington as a guest under his roof, but resolved, at all events, to give him a signal reception as the guest of the State over which he presided. Now it so happened that the "select men," or municipal authorities of Boston, had also made arrangements for receiving the President in their civic domain, and in so doing had proceeded without consulting the governor; as might have been expected, some clashing of rival plans was the result.

In pursuance of the governor's arrangement, the militia, with General Brooks at their head, and Mr. Samuel Adams, the lieutenant-governor, at the head of the executive council, met Washington at Cambridge, and escorted him with great ceremony to town. Being arrived at the grand entrance, which is over what is called "The Neck," the lieutenant-governor and the executive council were brought to a sudden halt by observing the municipal authorities drawn up in their carriages, in formal array, to pay civic honors to the city's guest. Here ensued a great question of etiquette. The executive council insisted on the right of the governor, as chief of the State, to receive and welcome its guest, at the entrance of its capital. "He should have met him at the boundary of the State over which he presides," replied the others; "and there have welcomed him to the hospitalities of the commonwealth. When the President is about to enter the town, it is the delegated



right of the *municipal authorities* thereof to receive and bid him welcome."

The contending parties remained drawn up resolutely in their carriages, while aides-de-camp and marshals were posting to and fro between them, carrying on a kind of diplomatic parley.

In the mean time the President, and Major Jackson, his secretary, had mounted on horseback, and were waiting on the Neck to be conducted into the town. The day was unusually cold and murky. Washington became chilled and impatient, and when informed of the cause of the detention, "Is there no other avenue into the town?" demanded he of Major Jackson. He was, in fact, on the point of wheeling about, when word was brought that the controversy was over, and that he would be received by the municipal authorities.

We give his own account of the succeeding part of the ceremony. "At the entrance, I was welcomed by the select men in a body. Then following the lieutenant-governor and council in the order we came from Cambridge (preceded by the town corps very handsomely dressed), we passed through the citizens, classed in their different professions, and under their own banners, till we came to the State House."

The streets, the doors, the windows, the housetops, were crowded with well-dressed people of both sexes. "He was on horseback," says an observer, "dressed in his old Continental uniform, with his hat off. He did not bow to the spectators as he passed, but sat on his horse with a calm, dignified air. He dismounted at the old State House, now City Hall,<sup>1</sup> and came out on a temporary balcony at the west end; a long procession passed before him, whose salutations he occasionally returned. These and other ceremonials being over, the lieutenant-governor and council, accompanied by the Vice-President, conducted Washington to his lodgings, where they took leave of him." And now he is doomed to the annoyance of a new question of etiquette. He had previously accepted the invitation of Governor Hancock to an informal dinner, but had expected that that functionary would wait upon him as soon as he should arrive; instead of which he received a message from him, pleading that he was too much indisposed to do so. Washington distrusted the sincerity of the apology. He had been given to understand that the governor wished to evade paying the first visit, conceiving that, as governor of a State, and within the bounds of that State, the point of etiquette made it

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<sup>1</sup> This was written some years ago.

proper that he should receive the first visit, even from the President of the United States. Washington determined to resist this pretension; he therefore excused himself from the informal dinner, and dined at his lodgings, where the Vice-President favored him with his company.

The next day the governor, on consultation with his friends, was persuaded to waive the point of etiquette, and sent "his best respects to the President," informing him that, if at home and at leisure, he would do himself the honor to visit him in half an hour, intimating that he would have done it sooner had his health permitted, and that it was not without hazard to his health that he did it now.

The following was Washington's reply, the last sentence of which almost savors of irony:

"SUNDAY, 26th October, 1 o'clock.

"The President of the United States presents his best respects to the Governor, and has the honor to inform him that he shall be home till two o'clock.

"The President need not express the pleasure it will give him to see the Governor; but at the same time, he most earnestly begs that the Governor will not hazard his health on the occasion."

From Washington's diary we find that the governor found strength to pay the litigated visit within the specified time — though, according to one authority, he went enveloped in red baize and was borne, in the arms of servants, into the house.<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear that any harm resulted from the hazard to which the governor exposed himself. At all events, the hydra etiquette was silenced and every thing went on pleasantly and decorously throughout the remainder of Washington's sojourn in Boston.

Various addresses were made to him in the course of his visit, but none that reached his heart more directly than that of his old companions in arms, the Cincinnati Society of Massachusetts, who hailed him as "their glorious leader in war, their illustrious example in peace."

"Dear, indeed," said he, in reply, "is the occasion which restores an intercourse with my associates in prosperous and adverse fortune; and enhanced are the triumphs of peace participated with those whose virtue and valor so largely contrib-

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<sup>1</sup> Sullivan's *Letters on Public Characters*, p. 15.

uted to procure them. To that virtue and valor your country has confessed her obligations. Be mine the grateful task to add to the testimony of a connection which it was my pride to own in the field, and is now my happiness to acknowledge in the enjoyments of peace and freedom."

After remaining in Boston for a week, fêted in the most hospitable manner, he appointed eight o'clock on Thursday the 29th, for his departure. The appointed time arrived, but not the escort; whereupon, punctual himself, and fearing, perhaps, to be detained by some new question of etiquette, he departed without them, and was overtaken by them on the road.

His journey eastward terminated at Portsmouth, whence he turned his face homeward by a middle route through the interior of the country to Hartford, and thence to New York, where he arrived between two and three o'clock on the 13th of November.

## CHAPTER XIX.

COLONEL JOHN TRUMBULL — MESSAGE TO WASHINGTON FROM LAFAYETTE — JEFFERSON'S EMBARKATION FOR AMERICA — WASHINGTON FORWARDS HIS COMMISSION AS SECRETARY OF STATE — HIS ACCEPTANCE.

Not long after Washington's return from his eastern tour, Colonel John Trumbull, his aide-de-camp in former days, now an historical painter of eminence, arrived from Europe, where he had been successfully prosecuting his art and preparing for his grand pictures, illustrative of our Revolutionary history. At Mr. Jefferson's house in Paris, he had been enabled to sketch from the life the portraits of several of the French officers who had been present at the capture of Cornwallis, and were now among the popular agitators of France. He had renewed his military acquaintance with Lafayette; witnessed the outbreak of the revolution; the storming of the Bastille; and attended the marquis on one occasion, when the latter succeeded in calming the riotous excesses of a mob, principally workmen, in the Faubourg St. Antoine.

Trumbull brought an especial message from Lafayette. The marquis had been anxious that Washington should know the state of affairs in France, and the progress and prospects of the momentous cause in which he was engaged, but, in the hurry of occupation, had not time to write with the necessary

detail ; finding, however, that Trumbull was soon to depart for the United States, he invited him to breakfast with him at an early hour and alone, for the express purpose of explaining matters to him frankly and fully, to be communicated by him to Washington, immediately on his arrival in America.

We give the colonel's report of Lafayette's conversation, as he has recorded it in his autobiography.

"You have witnessed the surface of things," said the marquis ; "it is for me to explain the interior. The object which is aimed at by the Duke de Rochefoucauld, M. Condorcet, myself, and some others, who consider ourselves leaders, is to obtain from France a constitution nearly resembling that of England, which we regard as the most perfect model of government hitherto known. To accomplish this, it is necessary to diminish, very essentially, the power of the king ; but our object is to retain the throne, in great majesty, as the first branch of the legislative power, but retrenching its executive power in one point, which, though very important in the British crown, we think is needless here. The peerage of France is already so numerous, that we would take from our king the right of creating new peers, except in cases where old families may become extinct. To all this, the king (who is one of the best of men, and sincerely desirous of the happiness of his people) most freely and cordially consents.

"We wish a House of Peers with powers of legislation similar to that of England, restricted in number to one hundred members, to be elected by the whole body from among themselves, in the same manner as the Scotch peers are in the British Parliament. . . . We wish, as the third branch of the legislative body, a House of Representatives, chosen by the great body of the people from among themselves, by such a ratio as shall not make the House too numerous ; and this branch of our project meets unanimous applause. . . . Unhappily, there is one powerful and wicked man, who, I fear, will destroy this beautiful fabric of human happiness — the Duke of Orleans. He does not, indeed, possess talent to carry into execution a great project, but he possesses immense wealth, and France abounds in marketable talents. Every city and town has young men eminent for abilities, particularly in the law — ardent in character, eloquent, ambitious of distinction, but poor. These are the instruments which the duke may command by money, and they will do his bidding. His hatred of the royal family can be satiated only by their ruin ; his ambition, probably, leads him to aspire to the throne.

"You saw the other day, in the mob, men who were called *les Marseillois, les patriots par excellence*. You saw them particularly active and audacious in stimulating the discontented artisans and laborers, who composed the great mass of the mob, to acts of violence and ferocity; these men are, in truth, desperadoes, assassins from the south of France, familiar with murder, robbery, and every atrocious crime, who have been brought up to Paris by the money of the duke, for the very purpose in which you saw them employed, of mingling in all mobs, and exciting the passions of the people to frenzy.

"This is the first act of the drama. The second will be to influence the elections, to fill the approaching Assembly with ardent, inexperienced, desperate, ambitious young men, who, instead of proceeding to discuss calmly the details of the plan of which I have given you the general outline, and to carry it quietly into operation, will, under disguise of zeal for the people, and abhorrence of the aristocrats, drive every measure to extremity, for the purpose of throwing the affairs of the nation into utter confusion, when the master spirit may accomplish his ultimate purpose."<sup>1</sup>

Such was the report of affairs in France which Lafayette transmitted by Trumbull to Washington. It was not long after this conversation of the colonel with the marquis that, the sittings of the National Assembly being transferred from Versailles to Paris, the Breton club fixed itself on the site of the convent of Jacobins; threw open its doors to the public, and soon, under the appellation of the JACOBIN CLUB, exercised the baleful influence in public affairs which Lafayette apprehended.

Washington had listened with profound attention to the report rendered by Trumbull. In the course of a subsequent conversation the latter informed him that Mr. Jefferson had embarked for America, and, it was probable, had already landed at Norfolk in Virginia. Washington immediately forwarded to him his commission as Secretary of State, requesting to know his determination on the subject.

Jefferson, in reply, expressed himself flattered by the nomination, but dubious of his being equal to its extensive and various duties, while, on the other hand, he felt familiar with the duties of his present office. "But it is not for an individual to choose his path," said he. "You are to marshal us as may best be for the public good. . . . Signify to me, by another line, your ultimate wish, and I shall conform to it cordially.

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<sup>1</sup> Trumbull's Autobiography, 151.

If it should be to remain in New York, my chief comfort will be to work under your eye: my only shelter the authority of your name and the wisdom of measures to be dictated by you and implicitly executed by me."<sup>1</sup>

Washington, in answer, informed him that he considered the successful administration of the general government an object of almost infinite consequence to the present and future happiness of the citizens of the United States; that he regarded the office of Secretary for the Department of State very important, and that he knew of no person who, in his judgment, could better execute the duties of it than himself.<sup>2</sup>

Jefferson accordingly accepted the nomination, but observed that the matters which had called him home, would probably prevent his setting out for New York before the month of March.

## CHAPTER XX.

REASSEMBLING OF CONGRESS — FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY — ITS DEBT AT HOME AND ABROAD — DEBTS OF THE STATES — HAMILTON'S REPORT — OPPOSITION TO IT — DR. STUART'S WARNING LETTER TO WASHINGTON — HIS REPLY — JEFFERSON'S ARRIVAL AT THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT — NEW YORK AT THAT PERIOD — JEFFERSON APPREHENDS MONARCHICAL DESIGNS.

CONGRESS reassembled on the 4th of January (1790), but a quorum of the two Houses was not present until the 8th, when the session was opened by Washington in form, with an address delivered before them in the Senate chamber.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, vol. iii. p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Washington's Writings, x. 77.

<sup>3</sup> As the degree of state with which the session was opened was subsequently a matter of comment, we extract from Washington's diary his own account of it, premising that the regulations were devised by General Knox and Colonel Humphreys.

"Friday 8th, according to appointment, at 11 o'clock, I set out for the City Hall in my coach, preceded by Colonel Humphreys and Major Jackson in uniform (on my two white horses), and followed by Messrs. Lear and Nelson in my chariot, and Mr. Lewis, on horseback, following them. In their rear was the Chief Justice of the United States and Secretaries of the Treasury and War Departments in their respective carriages, and in the order they are named. At the outer door of the Hall, I was met by the door-keepers of the Senate and House and conducted to the door of the Senate chamber, and passing from thence to the chair through the Senate on the right and House of Representatives on the left, I took my seat. The gentlemen who attended me followed and took their stands behind the senators: the whole rising as I entered. After being seated, at which time the members of both Houses also sat, I rose (as they also did), and made my speech, delivering one copy to the President of the Senate and another to the Speaker of the House of Representatives — after which, and being a few moments seated, I retired, bowing on each side to the assembly (who stood) as I passed, and descending to the lower hall attended as before, I returned with them to my home."

Among the most important objects suggested in the address for the deliberation of Congress, were provisions for national defence; provisions for facilitating intercourse with foreign nations, and defraying the expenses of diplomatic agents; laws for the naturalization of foreigners; uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures of the United States; facilities for the advancement of commerce, agriculture, and manufactures; attention to the post-office and post-roads; measures for the promotion of science and literature, and for the support of public credit.

This last object was the one which Washington had more immediately at heart. The government was now organized, apparently, to the satisfaction of all parties; but its efficiency would essentially depend on the success of a measure which Washington had pledged himself to institute, and which was yet to be tried; namely, a system of finance adapted to revive the national credit, and place the public debt in a condition to be paid off. The credit of the country was at a low ebb. The confederacy, by its articles, had the power of contracting debts for a national object, but no control over the means of payment. Thirteen independent legislatures could grant or withhold the means. The government was then a government under governments—the States had more power than Congress. At the close of the war the debt amounted to forty-two millions of dollars; but so little had the country been able to fulfil its engagements, owing to the want of a sovereign legislature having the sole and exclusive power of laying duties upon imports, and thus providing adequate resources, that the debt had swollen, through arrears of interest, to upwards of fifty-four millions. Of this amount nearly eight millions were due to France, between three and four millions to private lenders in Holland, and about two hundred and fifty thousand in Spain; making, altogether, nearly twelve millions due abroad. The debt contracted at home amounted to upwards of forty-two millions, and was due, originally, to officers and soldiers of the Revolutionary war, who had risked their lives for the cause; farmers who had furnished supplies for the public service, or whose property had been assumed for it; capitalists who, in critical periods of the war, had adventured their fortunes in support of their country's independence. The domestic debt, therefore, could not have had a more sacred and patriotic origin; but, in the long delay of national justice, the paper which represented these outstanding claims, had sunk to less than a sixth of its

nominal value, and the larger portion of it had been parted with at that depreciated rate, either in the course of trade, or to speculative purchasers, who were willing to take the risk of eventual payment, however little their confidence seemed to be warranted, at the time, by the pecuniary condition and prospects of the country.

The debt, when thus transferred, lost its commanding appeal to patriotic sympathy; but remained as obligatory in the eye of justice. In public newspapers, however, and in private circles, the propriety of a discrimination between the assignees and the original holders of the public securities, was freely discussed. Beside the foreign and domestic debt of the Federal government, the States, individually, were involved in liabilities contracted for the common cause, to an aggregate amount of about twenty-five millions of dollars; of which more than one-half was due from three of them; Massachusetts and South Carolina each owing more than five millions, and Virginia more than three and a half. The repudiation and the well-being of the government were, therefore, at stake upon the issue of some plan to retrieve the national credit, and establish it upon a firm and secure foundation.

The Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Hamilton), it will be remembered, had been directed by Congress to prepare such a plan during its recess. In the one thus prepared, he asserted, what none were disposed to question the propriety of paying the foreign debt according to its terms. He asserted, also, the equal validity of the original claims of the American creditors of the government; whether those creditors were the original holders of its certificates or subsequent purchasers of them at a depreciated value. The idea of any distinction between them, which some were inclined to advance, he repudiated as alike unjust, impolitic, and impracticable. He urged, moreover, the assumption, by the general government, of the separate debts of the States, contracted for the common cause, and that a like provision should be made for their payment as for the payment of those of the Union. They were all contracted in the struggle for national independence, not for the independence of any particular part. No more money would be required for their discharge as Federal, than as State debts. Money could be raised more readily by the Federal government than by the States, and all clashing and jealousy between State and Federal debtors would thus be prevented. A reason, also, which, no doubt, had great weight with him, though he did not bring it under consideration in his report, for fear, probably, of offend-



ing the jealousy of State sovereignty, dormant, but not extinct, was, that it would tend to unite the States financially, as they were united politically, and strengthen the central government by rallying capitalists around it; subjecting them to its influence, and rendering them agents of its will. He recommended, therefore, that the entire mass of debt be funded; the Union made responsible for it, and taxes imposed for its liquidation. He suggested, moreover, the expediency, for the greater security of the debt and punctuality in the payment of interest, that the domestic creditors submit to an abatement of accruing interest.

The plan was reported to the House by Mr. Hamilton, the 14th of January, but did not undergo consideration until the 8th of February, when it was opposed with great earnestness, especially the point of assuming the State debts, as tending to consolidation, as giving an undue influence to the general government, and as being of doubtful constitutionality. This financial union of the States was reprobated, not only on the floor of Congress, but in different parts of the Union, as fraught with political evil. The Northern and Eastern States generally favored the plan, as did also South Carolina, but Virginia manifested a determined opposition. The measure, however, passed, in Committee of the Whole, on the 9th of March, by a vote of 31 to 26.

The funding of the State debts was supposed to benefit, materially, the Northern States, in which was the entire capital of the country; yet South Carolina voted for the assumption. The fact is, opinions were honestly divided on the subject. The great majority were aiming to do their duty—to do what was right: but their disagreement was the result of real difficulties incident to the intricate and complicated problem with which they had to deal.

A letter from Washington's monitory friend, Dr. Stuart of Virginia (dated March 15), spoke with alarm of the jealous belief growing up in that quarter, that the Northern and Eastern States were combining to pursue their own exclusive interests. Many, he observed, who had heretofore been warm supporters of the government, were changing their sentiments, from a conviction of the impracticability of union with States whose interests were so dissimilar.

Washington had little sympathy with these sectional jealousies; and the noble language in which he rebukes them, cannot be too largely cited. "I am sorry," observes he, "such jealousies as you speak of should be gaining ground and

poisoning the minds of the southern people; but, admit the fact which is alleged as the cause of them, and give it full scope, does it amount to more than was known to every man of information before, at, and since the adoption of the Constitution? Was it not always believed that there are some points which peculiarly interest the Eastern States? And did any one who reads human nature, and more especially the character of the eastern people, conceive that they would not pursue them steadily, by a combination of their force? Are there not other points which equally concern the Southern States? If these States are less tenacious of their interest, or if, while the Eastern move in a solid phalanx to effect their views, the Southern are always divided, which of the two is most to be blamed? That there is a diversity of interests in the Union, none has denied. That this is the case, also, in every State, is equally certain; and that it even extends to the counties of individual States, can be as readily proved. Instance the southern and northern parts of Virginia, the upper and lower parts of South Carolina. Have not the interests of these always been at variance? Witness the county of Fairfax. Have not the interests of the people of the county varied, or the inhabitants been taught to believe so? These are well-known truths, and yet it did not follow that separation was to result from the disagreement.

“To constitute a dispute, there must be two parties. To understand it well, both parties, and all the circumstances must be fully heard; and, to accommodate differences, temper and mutual forbearance are requisite. Common danger brought the states into confederacy, and on the union our safety and importance depend. A spirit of accommodation was the basis of the present Constitution. Can it be expected, then, that the southern or eastern parts of the empire will succeed in all their measures? Certainly not. But I will readily grant that more points will be carried by the latter than the former, and for the reason which has been mentioned; namely, that in all great national questions, they move in unison, whilst the others are divided. But I ask again, which is most blameworthy, those who see and will steadily pursue their interest, or those who cannot see, or seeing, will not act wisely? And I will ask another question, of the highest magnitude in my mind, to wit, if the Eastern and Northern States are dangerous in *union*, will they be less in *separation*? If self-interest is their governing principle, will it forsake them, or be restrained by such an event? I hardly think it would. Then, independently of other

considerations, what would Virginia, and such other States as might be inclined to join her, gain by a separation? Would they not, most unquestionably, be the weaker party? "

At this juncture (March 21), when Virginian discontents were daily gaining strength, Mr. Jefferson arrived in New York to undertake the duties of the Department of State. We have shown his strong antipathies, while in Paris, to every thing of a monarchical or aristocratical tendency; he had just been in Virginia, where the forms and ceremonials adopted at the seat of our government, were subjects of cavil and sneer; where it was reported that Washington affected a monarchical style in his official intercourse, that he held court-like levees, and Mrs. Washington "queenly drawing-rooms," at which none but the aristocracy were admitted, that the manners of both were haughty, and their personal habits reserved and exclusive.

The impressions thus made on Jefferson's mind, received a deeper stamp on his arrival in New York, from conversations with his friend Madison, in the course of which the latter observed, that "the satellites and sycophants which surrounded Washington, had wound up the ceremonials of the government to a pitch of stateliness which nothing but his personal character could have supported, and which no character after him could ever maintain."

Thus prepossessed and premonished, Jefferson looked round him with an apprehensive eye, and appears to have seen something to startle him at every turn. We give, from his private correspondence, his own account of his impressions. "Being fresh from the French revolution, while in its first and pure stage, and, consequently, somewhat whetted up in my own republican principles, I found a state of things in the general society of the place, which I could not have supposed possible. The revolution I had left, and that we had just gone through in the recent change of our own government, being the common topics of conversation, I was astonished to find the general prevalence of monarchical sentiments, insomuch, that in maintaining those of republicanism, I had always the whole company on my hands, never scarcely finding among them a single co-advocate in that argument, unless some old member of Congress happened to be present. The furthest that any one would go in support of the republican features of our new government, would be to say, 'the present constitution is well as a beginning, and may be allowed a fair trial, but it is, in fact, only a stepping-stone to something better.'"

This picture, given under excitement and with preconceived

notions, is probably overcharged; but, allowing it to be true, we can hardly wonder at it, viewed in connection with the place and times. New York, during the session of Congress, was the gathering place of politicians of every party. The revolution of France had made the forms of government once more the usual topics of conversation, and revived the conflicts of opinions on the subject. As yet, the history of the world had furnished no favorable examples of popular government; speculative writers in England had contended that no government more popular than their own, was consistent with either internal tranquillity, the supremacy of the laws, or a great extent of empire. Our republic was ten times larger than any that had yet existed. Jay, one of the calmest thinkers of the Union, expressed himself dubiously on the subject.

“Whether any people could long govern themselves in an equal, uniform, and orderly manner, was a question of vital importance to the cause of liberty, but a question which, like others, whose solution depends on facts, could only be determined by experience—now, as yet, there had been very few opportunities of making the experiment.”

Alexander Hamilton, though pledged and sincerely disposed to support the republican form, with regard to our country, preferred, *theoretically*, a monarchical form; and, being frank of speech, and, as Gouverneur Morris writes, “prone to mount his hobby,” may have spoken openly in favor of that form as suitable to France; and as his admirers took their creed from him, opinions of the kind may have been uttered pretty freely at dinner-tables. These, however, which so much surprised and shocked Mr. Jefferson, were probably merely speculative opinions, broached in unguarded hours, with no sinister design, by men who had no thought of paving the way for a monarchy. They made, however, a deep impression on his apprehensive mind, which sank deeper and deeper until it became a fixed opinion with him, that there was the desire and aim of a large party, of which Hamilton was the leader, to give a regal form to the government.

## CHAPTER XXI.

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE STATE DEBTS DISCUSSED — WASHINGTON IN FAVOR — A MAJORITY OF TWO AGAINST IT — HAMILTON'S APPEAL TO JEFFERSON ON THE SUBJECT — THE LATTER ARRANGES FOR A COMPROMISE — HIS ACCOUNT OF IT — ADJUSTMENT ABOUT THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT — ASSUMPTION CARRIED — TREATY OF PEACE WITH THE CREEKS — CAVILLINGS ABOUT PRESIDENTIAL ETIQUETTE — WASHINGTON'S DEFENCE — ADJOURNMENT OF CONGRESS — FANCIED HARMONY OF THE CABINET — JEFFERSON SUSPECTS HAMILTON OF FINESSE IN PROCURING HIS AGENCY IN THE ASSUMPTION.

THE question of the assumption of the State debts was resumed in Congress on the 29th of March, on a motion to commit, which was carried by a majority of two; the five members from North Carolina (now a State of the Union), who were strongly opposed to assumption, having taken their seats and reversed the position of parties on the question. An angry and intemperate discussion was revived, much to the chagrin of Washington, who was concerned for the dignity of Congress; and who considered the assumption of the State debts, under proper restrictions and scrutiny into accounts, to be just and reasonable.<sup>1</sup> On the 12th of April, when the question to commit was taken, there was a majority of two against the assumption.

On the 26th the House was discharged, for the present, from proceeding on so much of the report as related to the assumption. Jefferson, who had arrived in New York in the midst of what he terms "this bitter and angry contest," had taken no concern in it; being, as he says, "a stranger to the ground, a stranger to the actors in it, so long absent as to have lost all familiarity with the subject, and to be unaware of its object." We give his own account of an earnest effort made by Hamilton, who, he says, was "in despair," to resuscitate, through his influence, his almost hopeless project. "As I was going to the President's one day, I met him [Hamilton] in the street. He walked me backwards and forwards before the President's door for half an hour. He painted pathetically the temper into which the legislature had been wrought;

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<sup>1</sup> See letter to David Stuart, Writings, x. p. 98.

the disgust of those who were called the creditor States; the danger of the *secession* of their members, and the separation of the States. He observed that the members of the administration ought to act in concert; that though this question was not of my department, yet a common duty should make it a common concern; that the President was the centre on which all administrative questions ultimately rested, and that all of us should rally around him, and support, with joint efforts, measures approved by him; and that the question having been lost by a small majority only, it was probable that an appeal from me to the judgment and discretion of some of my friends might effect a change in the vote, and the machine of government, now suspended, might be again set into motion. I told him that I was really a stranger to the whole subject; that not having yet informed myself of the system of finance adopted, I knew not how far this was a necessary sequence; that undoubtedly, if its rejection endangered a dissolution of our Union at this incipient stage, I should deem that the most unfortunate of all consequences, to avert which all partial and temporary evils should be yielded. I proposed to him, however, to dine with me the next day, and I would invite another friend or two, bring them into conference together, and I thought it impossible that reasonable men, consulting together coolly, could fail, by some mutual sacrifices of opinion, to form a compromise which was to save the Union. The discussion took place. I could take no part in it but an exhortatory one, because I was a stranger to the circumstances which should govern it. But it was finally agreed, that whatever importance had been attached to the rejection of this proposition, the preservation of the Union and of concord among the States was more important, and that, therefore, it would be better that the vote of rejection should be rescinded, to effect which some members should change their votes. But it was observed that this pill would be peculiarly bitter to the Southern States, and that some concomitant measures should be adopted to sweeten it a little to them. There had before been projects to fix the seat of government either at Philadelphia or at Georgetown on the Potomac; and it was thought that, by giving it to Philadelphia for ten years, and to Georgetown permanently afterwards, this might, as an anodyne, calm in some degree the ferment which might be excited by the other measure alone. So two of the Potomac members (White and Lee, but White with a revulsion of stomach almost convulsive) agreed to change their votes, and

Hamilton undertook to carry the other point. In doing this, the influence he had established over the eastern members, with the agency of Robert Morris with those of the Middle States, effected his side of the engagement."<sup>1</sup>

The decision of Congress was ultimately in favor of assumption, though the form in which it finally passed differed somewhat from the proposition of Hamilton. A specific sum was assumed (\$21,500,000), and this was distributed among the States in specific portions. Thus modified, it passed the Senate, July 22, by the close vote of fourteen to twelve; and the House, July 24, by thirty-four to twenty-eight, "after having," says Washington, "been agitated with a warmth and intemperance, with prolixity and threats which, it is to be feared, have lessened the dignity of Congress and decreased the respect once entertained for it."

The question about the permanent seat of government, which, from the variety of contending interests, had been equally a subject of violent contest, was now compromised. It was agreed that Congress should continue for ten years to hold its sessions at Philadelphia; during which time the public buildings should be erected at some place on the Potomac, to which the government should remove at the expiration of the above term. A territory, ten miles square, selected for the purpose on the confines of Maryland and Virginia, was ceded by those States to the United States, and subsequently designated as the District of Columbia.

One of the last acts of the Executive during the session was the conclusion of a treaty of peace and friendship with the Creek nation of Indians, represented at New York by Mr. M'Gillivray, and thirty of the chiefs and head men. By this treaty (signed August 7), an extensive territory, claimed by Georgia, was relinquished, greatly to the discontent of that State; being considered by it an unjustifiable abandonment of its rights and interests. Jefferson, however, lauded the treaty as important, "drawing a line," said he, "between the Creeks and Georgia, and enabling the government to do, as it will do, justice against either party offending."

In a familiar conversation with the President, Jefferson remonstrated frequently and earnestly against the forms and ceremonies prevailing at the seat of government. Washington, in reply, gave the explanation which we have stated in a preceding chapter; that they had been adopted at the advice of others,

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, ix. 93, *The Annals*.

and that for himself he was indifferent to all forms. He soon, however, became painfully aware of the exaggerated notions on the subject prevalent in Virginia. A letter from his friend, Dr. Stuart, informed him that Patrick Henry had scouted the idea of being elected to the Senate; he was too old, he said, to fall into the awkward imitations which were now become fashionable. "From this expression," adds Mr. Stuart, "I suspect the old patriot has heard some extraordinary representations of the etiquette established at your levees." Another person, whom Dr. Stuart designates as Colonel B——, had affirmed "that there was more pomp used there than at St. James's, where he had been, and that Washington's bows were more distant and stiff."

These misapprehensions and exaggerations, prevalent in his native State, touched Washington to the quick, and called forth a more sensitive reply than, on such subjects, he was accustomed to make. "That I have not been able," writes he, "to make bows to the taste of poor Colonel B—— (who, by the by, I believe, never saw one of them), is to be regretted, especially, too, as, upon those occasions, they were indiscriminately bestowed, and the best I was master of. Would it not have been better to throw the veil of charity over them, ascribing their stiffness to the effects of age, or to the unskilfulness of my teacher, rather than to pride and the dignity of office, which, God knows, has no charm for me? For I can truly say, I had rather be at Mount Vernon with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the seat of government by the officers of State and the representatives of every power in Europe."

He then goes on to give a sketch of his levees, and the little ceremony that prevailed there. As to the visits made on those occasions to the presidential mansion, they were optional, and made without invitation. "Between the hours of three and four, every Tuesday, I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please; a porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they please, and without ceremony. At their first entrance they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this, I am unable to discover. Perhaps it consists in not sitting. To this, two reasons are opposed: first, it is unusual; secondly, which is a more substantial one, because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs which would be sufficient to admit it.

"Similar to the above, but of a more sociable kind, are the



visits every Friday afternoon to Mrs. Washington, where I always am. These public meetings, and a dinner once a week, to as many as my table will hold, with the references to and from the different departments of state, and other communications with all parts of the Union, are as much, if not more, than I am able to undergo; for I have already had, within less than a year, two severe attacks—the last worse than the first. A third, more than probably, will put me to sleep with my fathers.”

Congress adjourned on the 12th of August. Jefferson, commenting on the discord that had prevailed for a time among the members, observes, that in the latter part of the session, they had re-acquired the harmony which had always distinguished their proceedings before the introduction of the two disagreeable subjects of the Assumption and the Residence: “these,” said he, “really threatened, at one time, a separation of the legislature *sine die*.”

“It is not foreseen,” adds he, sanguinely, “that any thing so generative of dissension can arise again; and, therefore, the friends of government hope, that difficulty surmounted in the States, every thing will work well.”<sup>1</sup>

Washington, too, however grieved and disappointed he may have been by the dissensions which had prevailed in Congress, consoled himself by the fancied harmony of his cabinet. Singularly free himself from all jealousy of the talents and popularity of others, and solely actuated by zeal for the public good, he had sought the ablest men to assist him in his arduous task, and supposed them influenced by the same unselfish spirit. In a letter to Lafayette, he writes, “Many of your old acquaintances and friends are concerned with me in the administration of this government. By having Mr. Jefferson at the head of the department of State, Mr. Jay of the Judiciary, Hamilton of the Treasury, and Knox of War, I feel myself supported by able coadjutors who harmonize extremely well together.”

Yet, at this very moment, a lurking spirit of rivalry between Jefferson and Hamilton was already existing and daily gaining strength. Jefferson, who, as we have intimated, already considered Hamilton a monarchist in his principles, regarded all his financial schemes with suspicion, as intended to strengthen the influence of the treasury, and make its chief the master of every vote in the legislature, “which might give to the government the direction suited to his political views.”

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, iii. 184.

Under these impressions, Jefferson looked back with an angry and resentful eye, to the manner in which Hamilton had procured his aid in effecting the measure of assumption. He now regarded it as a finesse by which he had been entrapped, and stigmatized the measure itself as a "fiscal manœuvre, to which he had most ignorantly and innocently been made to hold the candle."<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXII.

LAFAYETTE AT THE HEAD OF THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE — HIS LETTER TO WASHINGTON — GOUVERNEUR MORRIS'S OPINION OF HIS POSITION — WASHINGTON'S DUBIOUS AND ANXIOUS VIEWS — PRESENTED BY LAFAYETTE WITH THE KEY OF THE BASTILE — VISITS RHODE ISLAND AND MOUNT VERNON.

DURING these early stages of his administration the attention of Washington was often called off from affairs at home to affairs in France; and to the conspicuous and perilous part which his friend and disciple Lafayette was playing in the great revolutionary drama.

"Your friend, the Marquis de Lafayette," writes the Marquis de la Luzerne, "finds himself at the head of the revolution; and, indeed, it is a very fortunate circumstance for the State that he is, but very little so for himself. Never has any man been placed in a more critical situation. A good citizen, a faithful subject, he is embarrassed by a thousand difficulties in making many people sensible of what is proper, who very often feel it not, and who sometimes do not understand what it is."

Lafayette, too, amid the perplexities of conducting a revolution, looked back to the time when, in his early campaigns in America, he had shared Washington's councils, bivouacked with him on the field of battle, and been benefited by his guardian wisdom in every emergency.

"How often, my well-beloved general," writes he (January, 1790), "have I regretted your sage councils and friendly support. We have advanced in the career of the revolution without the vessel of state being wrecked against the rocks of aristocracy or faction. In the midst of efforts, always renewing, of the partisans of the past and of the ambitious, we advance towards a tolerable conclusion. At present, that which existed has

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, ix. 92.

been destroyed; a new political edifice is forming; without being perfect, it is sufficient to assure liberty. Thus prepared, the nation will be in a state to elect, in two years, a convention which can correct the faults of the constitution. . . . The result will, I hope, be happy for my country and for humanity. One perceives the germs of liberty in other parts of Europe. I will encourage their development by all the means in my power."

Gouverneur Morris, who is no enthusiast of the revolution, regards its progress with a dubious eye. Lafayette, in the previous month of November, had asked his opinion of his situation. "I give it to him," writes Morris, "*sans ménagement*. I tell him that the time approaches when all good men must cling to the throne. That the present king is very valuable on account of his moderation; and if he should possess too great authority, might be persuaded to grant a proper constitution. That the thing called a constitution, which the Assembly have framed, is good for nothing. That, as to himself, his personal situation is very delicate. That he nominally, but not really, commands his troops. That I really cannot understand how he is to establish discipline among them, but, unless he can accomplish that object, he must be ruined sooner or later."

On the 22d of January, 1790, Morris writes to Washington, "Our friend, Lafayette, burns with desire to be at the head of an army in Flanders, and drive the Stadtholder into a ditch. He acts now a splendid, but dangerous part. Unluckily, he has given in to measures, as to the constitution, which he does not heartily approve, and heartily approves many things which experience will demonstrate to be injurious."<sup>1</sup>

Far removed as Washington was from the theatre of political action, and but little acquainted with many of the minute circumstances which might influence important decisions, he was cautious in hazarding opinions in his replies to his French correspondents. Indeed, the whole revolutionary movement appeared to him so extraordinary in its commencement, so wonderful in its progress, and so stupendous in its possible consequences, that he declared himself almost lost in the contemplation of it. "Of one thing you may rest perfectly assured," writes he to the Marquis de la Luzerne, "that nobody is more anxious for the happy issue of that business than I am; as no one can wish more sincerely for the prosperity of the French nation than I do. Nor is it without the most sensible pleasure

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks' Life of Morris, ii. 86.

that I learn that our friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, has, in acting the arduous part which has fallen to his share, conducted himself with so much wisdom and apparently with such general satisfaction."

A letter subsequently received from Lafayette gives him two months' later tidings, extending to the middle of March. "Our revolution pursues its march as happily as is possible, with a nation which, receiving at once all its liberties, is yet subject to confound them with licentiousness. The Assembly has more of hatred against the ancient system, than of experience to organize the new constitutional government; the ministers regret their ancient power, and do not dare to make use of that which they have; in short, as all which existed has been destroyed, and replaced by institutions very incomplete, there is ample matter for critiques and calumnies. Add to this, we are attacked by two sorts of enemies; the aristocrats who aim at a counter-revolution, and the factious who would annihilate all authority, perhaps even attempt the life of the members of the reigning branch. These two parties foment all the troubles.

"After having avowed all this, my dear general, I will tell you, with the same frankness, that we have made an admirable and almost incredible destruction of all the abuses, of all the prejudices; that all which was not useful to the people, all which did not come from them, has been retrenched; that, in considering the situation, topographical, moral, and political, of France, we have effected more changes in ten months, than the most presumptuous patriots could have hoped, and that the reports about our anarchy, our internal troubles, are greatly exaggerated.

In concluding his letter, he writes: "Permit me, my dear general, to offer you a picture representing the Bastille, such as it was some days after I had given orders for its demolition. I make you homage, also, of the principal key of this fortress of despotism. It is a tribute which I owe you, as son to my adopted father, as aide-de-camp to my general, as missionary of liberty to its patriarch."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Paine was to have been the bearer of the key, but he forwarded it to Washington from London. "I feel myself happy," writes he, "in being the person through whom the marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the spoils of despotism, and the first ripe fruits of American principles, transplanted

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<sup>1</sup> Mem. de Lafayette, t. ii. 446.

into Europe, to his great master and patron. That the principles of America opened the Bastile, is not to be doubted, and, therefore, the key comes to the right place."

Washington received the key with reverence, as a "token of the victory gained by liberty over despotism;" and it is still preserved at Mount Vernon, as a precious historical relic.

His affectionate solicitude for the well-being of Lafayette, was somewhat relieved by the contents of his letter; but while his regard for the French nation made him rejoice in the progress of the political reform which he considered essential to its welfare, he felt a generous solicitude for the personal safety of the youthful monarch, who had befriended America in its time of need.

"Happy am I, my good friend," writes he to the marquis, "that, amidst all the tremendous tempests which have assailed your political ship, you have had address and fortitude enough to steer her hitherto safely through the quicksands and rocks which threatened instant destruction on every side; and that your young king, in all things, seems so well disposed to conform to the wishes of the nation. In such an important, such a hazardous voyage, when every thing dear and sacred is embarked, you know full well, my best wishes have never left you for a moment. Yet I will avow, that the accounts we received through the English papers, which were sometimes our only channels of information, caused our fears of failure almost to exceed our expectations of success."

Those fears were not chimerical; for, at the very time he penned this letter, the Jacobin Club of Paris had already sent forth ramifications throughout France; corresponding clubs were springing up by hundreds in the provinces, and every thing was hurrying forward to a violent catastrophe.

Three days after the despatch of the last-cited letter, and two days after the adjournment of Congress, Washington, accompanied by Mr. Jefferson, departed by water on a visit to Rhode Island, which State had recently acceded to the Union. He was cordially welcomed by the inhabitants, and returned to New York, after an absence of ten days, whence he again departed for his beloved Mount Vernon, there to cast off public cares as much as possible, and enjoy the pleasures of the country during the residue of the recess of Congress.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

FRONTIER DIFFICULTIES WITH THE INDIANS — GENERAL HARMER'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THEM — AMBUSCADE OF COLONEL HARDIN'S DETACHMENT — ESCAPE OF CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG — A SECOND DETACHMENT OF COLONEL HARDIN COMPELLED TO RETREAT — WASHINGTON'S LONG ANXIETY AS TO THE RESULT OF THE ENTERPRISE — FINAL TIDINGS.

FREQUENT depredations had of late been made on our frontier settlements by what Washington termed "certain banditti of Indians" from the north-west side of the Ohio. Some of our people had been massacred and others carried into deplorable captivity.

Strict justice and equity had always formed the basis of Washington's dealings with the Indian tribes, and he had endeavored to convince them that such was the general policy of our government; but his efforts were often thwarted by the conduct of our own people; the encroachments of land speculators and the lawless conduct of our frontiersmen; and jealousies thus excited were fomented by the intrigues of foreign agents.

The Indians of the Wabash and the Miami Rivers, who were the present aggressors, were numerous, warlike, and not deficient in discipline. They were well armed also, obtaining weapons and ammunition from the posts which the British still retained within the territories of the United States, contrary to the treaty of peace.

Washington had deprecated a war with these savages, whom he considered acting under delusion; but finding all pacific overtures unavailing, and rather productive of more daring atrocities, he felt compelled to resort to it, alike by motives of policy, humanity, and justice. An act had been provided for emergencies, by which the President was empowered to call out the militia for the protection of the frontier; this act he put in force in the interval of Congress; and under it an expedition was set on foot, which began its march on the 30th of September from Fort Washington (which stood on the site of the present city of Cincinnati). Brigadier-General Harmer, a veteran of the Revolution, led the expedition, having under him three hundred and twenty regulars, with militia detachments from Pennsylvania and Virginia (or Kentucky), making

in all fourteen hundred and fifty-three men. After a march of seventeen days, they approached the principal village of the Miamis. The Indians did not await an attack, but set fire to the village, and fled to the woods. The destruction of the place, with that of large quantities of provisions, was completed.

An Indian trail being discovered, Colonel Hardin, a Continental officer who commanded the Kentucky militia, was detached to follow it, at the head of one hundred and fifty of his men, and about thirty regulars, under Captain Armstrong and Ensign Hartshorn. They followed the trail for about six miles, and were crossing a plain covered by thickets, when suddenly there were volleys of rifles on each side, from unseen marksmen, accompanied by the horrid war-whoop. The trail had, in fact, decoyed them into an ambush of seven hundred savages, under the famous warrior Little Turtle. The militia fled, without firing a musket. The savages now turned upon the little handful of regulars, who stood their ground, and made a brave resistance with the bayonet until all were slain, excepting Captain Armstrong, Ensign Hartshorn, and five privates. The ensign was saved by falling behind a log, which screened him from his pursuers. Armstrong plunged into a swamp, where he sank up to his neck, and remained for several hours of the night, within two hundred yards of the field of action, a spectator of the war-dance of the savages over the slain. The two officers who escaped thus narrowly, found their way back to the camp about six miles distant.<sup>1</sup>

The army, notwithstanding, effected the main purpose of the expedition in laying waste the Indian villages and destroying their winter stock of provisions, after which it commenced its march back to Fort Washington. On the 21st of October, when it was halted about ten miles to the west of Chillicothe, an opportunity was given Colonel Hardin to wipe out the late disgrace of his arms. He was detached with a larger body of militia than before, and sixty regulars, under Major Willys, to seek and bring the savages to action. The accounts of these Indian wars are very confused. It appears, however, that he had another encounter with Little Turtle and his braves. It was a bloody battle, fought well on both sides. The militia behaved bravely, and lost many men and officers, as did the regulars; Major Willys fell at the commencement of the action. Colonel Hardin was at length compelled to retreat, leaving the dead and wounded in the hands of the enemy.

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<sup>1</sup> Butler's Hist. of Kentucky, 192.

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After he had rejoined the main force, the whole expedition made its way back to Fort Washington, on the banks of the Ohio.

During all this time, Washington had been rusticated at Mount Vernon, in utter ignorance of the events of this expedition. Week after week elapsed, without any tidings of its issue, progress, or even commencement. On the 2d of November he wrote to the Secretary of War (General Knox), expressing his surprise at this lack of information, and his anxiety as to the result of the enterprise, and requesting him to forward any official or other accounts that he might have relating to it.

"This matter," observed he, "favorable or otherwise in the issue, will require to be laid before Congress, that the motives which induced the expedition may appear." Nearly another month elapsed; the time for the reassembling of Congress was at hand, yet Washington was still without the desired information. It was not until the last of November, that he received a letter from Governor George Clinton, of New York, communicating particulars of the affair related to him by Brant, the celebrated Indian chief.

"If the information of Captain Brant be true," wrote Washington, in reply, "the issue of the expedition against the Indians will indeed prove unfortunate and disgraceful to the troops who suffered themselves to be ambuscaded."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

CONGRESS REASSEMBLES AT PHILADELPHIA — RESIDENCE OF WASHINGTON AT THE NEW SEAT OF GOVERNMENT — THE STATE CARRIAGE — HAMILTON'S FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS — IMPOST AND EXCISE BILL — PASSAGE OF A BILL FOR A NATIONAL BANK — JEFFERSON'S OBJECTIONS — FORMATION OF TWO POLITICAL PARTIES UNDER HAMILTON AND JEFFERSON — THEIR DIFFERENT VIEWS — DISSATISFACTION OF CONGRESS AT THE REPORT OF HARMER'S EXPEDITION — WASHINGTON'S ADDRESS TO THE SENECA CHIEFS — HIS DESIRE TO CIVILIZE THE SAVAGES — KENTUCKY AND VERMONT ADMITTED INTO THE UNION — FIRST CONGRESS EXPIRES — A NEW EXPEDITION PROJECTED AGAINST THE HOSTILE TRIBES UNDER GENERAL ST. CLAIR — WASHINGTON'S SOLEMN WARNING ON TAKING LEAVE OF HIM.

· CONGRESS reassembled, according to adjournment, on the first Monday in December, at Philadelphia, which was now, for a time, the seat of government. A house belonging to Mr.



Robert Morris, the financier, had been hired by Washington for his residence, and at his request, had undergone additions and alterations "in a plain and neat, and not by any means in an extravagant style."

His secretary, Mr. Lear, had made every preparation for his arrival and accommodation, and among other things had spoken of the rich and elegant style in which the state carriage was fitted up. "I had rather have heard," replied Washington, "that my repaired coach was plain and elegant than rich and elegant."

Congress, at its opening, was chiefly occupied in financial arrangements, intended to establish the public credit and provide for the expenses of government. According to the statement of the Secretary of the Treasury, an additional annual revenue of eight hundred and twenty-six thousand dollars would be required, principally to meet the additional charges arising from the assumption of the State debts. He proposed to raise it by an increase of the impost on foreign distilled spirits, and a tax by way of excise on spirits distilled at home. An Impost and Excise bill was accordingly introduced into Congress, and met with violent opposition. An attempt was made to strike out the excise, but failed, and the whole bill was finally carried through the House.

Mr. Hamilton, in his former Treasury report, had recommended the establishment of a National Bank; he now, in a special report, urged the policy of the measure. A bill, introduced in conformity with his views, was passed in the Senate, but vehemently opposed in the House; partly on considerations of policy; but chiefly on the ground of constitutionality. On one side it was denied that the constitution had given to Congress the power of incorporation; on the other side it was insisted that such power was incident to the power vested in Congress for raising money.

The question was argued at length, and with great ardor, and after passing the House of Representatives by a majority of nineteen votes, came before the executive for his approval. Washington was fully alive to the magnitude of the question and the interest felt in it by the opposing parties. The cabinet was divided on it. Jefferson and Randolph denied its constitutionality, Hamilton and Knox maintained it. Washington required of each minister the reasons of his opinion in writing; and, after maturely weighing them, gave his sanction to the act, and the bill was carried into effect.

The objection of Jefferson to a bank was not merely on con-

stitutional grounds. In his subsequent writings he avows himself opposed to banks, as introducing a paper instead of a cash system, — raising up a moneyed aristocracy, and abandoning the public to the discretion of avarice and swindlers. Paper money might have some advantages, but its abuses were inevitable, and by breaking up the measure of value, it made a lottery of all private property. These objections he maintained to his dying day; but he had others, which may have been more cogent with him in the present instance. He considered the bank as a powerful engine intended by Hamilton to complete the machinery by which the whole action of the legislature was to be placed under the direction of the Treasury, and shaped to further a monarchical system of government. Washington, he affirmed, was not aware of the drift or effect of Hamilton's schemes. "Unversed in financial projects and calculations and budgets, his approbation of them was bottomed on his confidence in the man."

Washington, however, was not prone to be swayed in his judgments by blind partiality. When he distrusted his own knowledge in regard to any important measure, he asked the written opinions of those of his council who he thought were better informed, and examined and weighed them, and put them to the test of his almost unfailing sagacity. This was the way he had acted as a general, in his military councils, and he found the same plan efficacious in his cabinet. His confidence in Hamilton's talents, information, and integrity had led him to seek his counsels; but his approbation of those counsels was bottomed on a careful investigation of them. It was the same in regard to the counsels of Jefferson; they were received with great deference, but always deliberately and scrupulously weighed. The opposite policy of these rival statesmen brought them into incessant collision. "Hamilton and myself," writes Jefferson, "were daily pitted in the cabinet like two cocks." The warm-hearted Knox always sided with his old companion in arms; whose talents he revered. He is often noticed with a disparaging sneer by Jefferson, in consequence. Randolph commonly adhered to the latter. Washington's calm and massive intellect overruled any occasional discord. His policy with regard to his constitutional advisers has been happily estimated by a modern statesman: "He sought no unit cabinet, according to the set phrase of succeeding times. He asked no suppression of sentiment, no concealment of opinion; he exhibited no mean jealousy of high talent in others. He gathered around him

the greatest public men of that day, and some of them to be ranked with the greatest of any day. He did not leave Jefferson and Hamilton without the cabinet, to shake, perhaps, the whole fabric of government in their fierce wars and rivalries, but he took them within, where he himself might arbitrate their disputes as they arose, and turn to the best account for the country their suggestions as they were made."<sup>1</sup>

In the mean time two political parties were forming throughout the Union, under the adverse standards of these statesmen. Both had the good of the country at heart, but differed as to the policy by which it was to be secured. The Federalists, who looked up to Hamilton as their model, were in favor of strengthening the general government so as to give it weight and dignity abroad and efficiency at home; to guard it against the encroachments of the individual States and a general tendency to anarchy. The other party, known as republicans or democrats, and taking Mr. Jefferson's view of affairs, saw in all the measures advocated by the Federalists, an intention to convert the Federal into a great central or consolidated government, preparatory to a change from a republic to a monarchy.

The particulars of General Harmer's expedition against the Indians, when reported to Congress, gave great dissatisfaction. The conduct of the troops, in suffering themselves to be surprised, was for some time stigmatized as disgraceful. Further troubles in that quarter were apprehended, for the Miamis were said to be less disheartened by the ravage of their villages than exultant at the successful ambuscades of Little Turtle.

Three Seneca chiefs, Cornplanter, Half Town, and Great Tree, being at the seat of government on business of their own nation, offered to visit these belligerent tribes, and persuade them to bury the hatchet. Washington, in a set speech, encouraged them in the undertaking. "By this humane measure," said he, "you will render these mistaken people a great service, and probably prevent their being swept off the face of the earth. The United States require only that these people should demean themselves peaceably. But they may be assured that the United States are able, and will most certainly punish them severely for all their robberies and murders."

Washington had always been earnest in his desire to civilize the savages, but had little faith in the expedient which had been pursued, of sending their young men to our colleges; the true means, he thought, was to introduce the arts and

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<sup>1</sup> Speech of R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia.

habits of husbandry among them. In concluding his speech to the Seneca chiefs, he observed, "When you return to your country, tell your nation that it is my desire to promote their prosperity by teaching them the use of domestic animals, and the manner that the white people plough and raise so much corn; and if, upon consideration, it would be agreeable to the nation at large to learn those arts, I will find some means of teaching them at some places within their country as shall be agreed upon."

In the course of the present session, Congress received and granted the applications of Kentucky and Vermont for admission into the Union, the former after August, 1792; the latter immediately.

On the 3d of March the term of this first Congress expired. Washington, after reciting the various important measures that had been effected, testified to the great harmony and cordiality which had prevailed. In some few instances, he admitted, particularly in passing the law for higher duties on spirituous liquors, and more especially on the subject of the bank, "the line between the southern and eastern interests had appeared more strongly marked than could be wished," the former against and the latter in favor of those measures, "but the debates," adds he, "were conducted with temper and candor."

As the Indians on the north-west side of the Ohio still continued their hostilities, one of the last measures of Congress had been an act to augment the military establishments, and to place in the hands of the Executive more ample means for the protection of the frontiers. A new expedition against the belligerent tribes had, in consequence, been projected. General St. Clair, actually governor of the territory west of the Ohio, was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces to be employed.

Washington had been deeply chagrined by the mortifying disasters of General Harmer's expedition to the Wabash, resulting from Indian ambushes. In taking leave of his old military comrade, St. Clair, he wished him success and honor, but gave him a solemn warning. "You have your instructions from the Secretary of War. I had a strict eye to them, and will add but one word—Beware of a surprise! You know how the Indians fight. I repeat it—*Beware of a surprise!*" With these warning words sounding in his ear, St. Clair departed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rush's Washington in Domestic Life, 67.

## CHAPTER XXV.

WASHINGTON'S TOUR THROUGH THE SOUTHERN STATES — LETTER TO LAFAYETTE — GLOOMY PICTURE OF FRENCH AFFAIRS BY GOUVERNEUR MORRIS — HIS ALLUSION TO LAFAYETTE — LAFAYETTE DEPICTS THE TROUBLES OF A PATRIOT LEADER — WASHINGTON'S REPLY — JEFFERSON'S ARDENT VIEWS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION — DISTRUST OF JOHN ADAMS — HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO FENNO'S GAZETTE — REPRINT OF PAINE'S RIGHTS OF MAN — FLIGHT AND RECAPTURE OF LOUIS XVI — JEFFERSON COMMUNICATES THE NEWS TO WASHINGTON — HIS SATISFACTION WHEN THE KING ACCEPTS THE CONSTITUTION.

IN the month of March, Washington set out on a tour through the Southern States; travelling with one set of horses and making occasional halts. The route projected, and of which he had marked off the halting places, was by Fredericksburg, Richmond, Wilmington (N.C.) and Charleston to Savannah; thence to Augusta, Columbia, and the interior towns of North Carolina and Virginia, comprising a journey of eighteen hundred and eighty-seven miles; all which he accomplished without any interruption from sickness, bad weather, or any untoward accident. "Indeed," writes he, "so highly were we favored that we arrived at each place where I proposed to make any halt, on the very day I fixed upon before we set out. The same horses performed the whole tour; and, although much reduced in flesh, kept up their full spirits to the last day."

He returned to Philadelphia on the 6th of July, much pleased with his tour. It had enabled him, he said, to see, with his own eyes, the situation of the country, and to learn more accurately the disposition of the people, than he could have done from any verbal information. He had looked around him, in fact, with a paternal eye, been cheered as usual by continual demonstrations of a nation's love, and his heart had warmed with the reflection how much of this national happiness had been won by his own patriotic exertions.

"Every day's experience of the government of the United States," writes he to David Humphreys, "seems to confirm its establishment, and to render it more popular. A ready acquiescence in the laws made under it shows, in a strong light, the confidence which the people have in their representatives, and in the upright views of those who administer the government.

At the time of passing a law imposing a duty on home-made spirits, it was vehemently affirmed by many that such a law could never be executed in the Southern States, particularly in Virginia and South Carolina. . . . But from the best information I could get on my journey respecting its operations on the minds of the people — and I took some pains to obtain information on this point — there remains not a doubt but it will be carried into effect, not only without opposition, but with very general approbation, in those very parts where it was foretold that it never would be submitted to by any one.”

“Our public credit,” adds he, “stands on that ground, which, three years ago, it would have been madness to have foretold. The astonishing rapidity with which the newly instituted bank was filled, gives an unexampled proof of the resources of our countrymen and their confidence in public measures. On the first day of opening the subscription the whole number of shares (twenty thousand) were taken up in one hour, and application made for upwards of four thousand shares more than were granted by the institution, besides many others that were coming in from various quarters.”<sup>1</sup>

To his comrade in arms, Lafayette, he also writes exultingly of the flourishing state of the country and the attachment of all classes to the government: —

“While in Europe, wars or commotions seem to agitate almost every nation, peace and tranquillity prevail among us, except in some parts of our Western frontiers, where the Indians have been troublesome, to reclaim or chastise whom, proper measures are now pursuing. This contrast between the situation of the people of the United States and those of Europe, is too striking to be passed over, even by the most superficial observer, and may, I believe, be considered as one great cause of leading the people here to reflect more attentively on their own prosperous state, and to examine, more minutely, and consequently approve more fully, of the government under which they live, than they otherwise would have done. But we do not wish to be the only people who may taste the sweets of an equal and good government. We look with an anxious eye to the time when happiness and tranquillity shall prevail in your country, and when all Europe shall be freed from commotion, tumults, and alarms.”

Letters from Gouverneur Morris had given him a gloomy picture of French affairs. “This unhappy country,” writes he,

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, x. 171.

“bewildered in pursuit of metaphysical whimsies, presents to our moral view a mighty ruin. Like the remnants of ancient magnificence, we admire the architecture of the temple, while we detest the false god to whom it was dedicated. Daws and ravens, and the birds of night, now build their nests in its niches. The sovereign, humbled to the level of a beggar’s pity, without resources, without authority, without a friend. The Assembly at once a master and a slave, new in power, wild in theory, raw in practice. It engrosses all functions, though incapable of exercising any, and has taken from this fierce, ferocious people, every restraint of religion and of respect. . . . Lafayette has hitherto acted a splendid part. The king obeys but detests him. He obeys because he fears. Whoever possesses the royal person may do whatever he pleases with the royal character and authority. Hence, it happens that the ministers are of Lafayette’s appointment.”<sup>1</sup>

Lafayette’s own letters depict the troubles of a patriot leader in the stormy time of a revolution: a leader warm, generous, honest, impulsive, but not far-seeing. “I continue to be forever tossed about on an ocean of factions and commotions of every kind; for it is my fate to be attacked with equal animosity; on one side, by all that is aristocratic, servile, parliamentary, in a word, by all the adversaries of my free and levelling doctrine; on the other, by the Orleans and anti-monarchical factions, and all the workers of disorder and pillage. If it is doubtful whether I may escape personally from so many enemies, the success of our grand and good revolution is, at least, thank heaven, assured in France, and soon it will propagate itself in the rest of the world, if we succeed in establishing public order in this country. Unfortunately, the people have much better learnt how to overturn despotism, than to comprehend the duty of submission to law. It is to you, my dear general, the patriarch and generalissimo of the promoters of universal liberty, that I ought always to render a faithful account of the conduct of your aide-de-camp in the service of this grand cause.”

And in a subsequent letter: “I would that I could give you the assurance that our troubles were terminated and our constitution established. Nevertheless, though our horizon is still very dark, we commence to foresee the moment when a new legislative body will replace this Assembly; and, unless there come an intervention of foreign powers, I hope that four months

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks’ *Life of G. Morris*, li. 117–119.

from this your friend will have resumed the life of a peaceful and simple citizen.

"The rage of party, even between the different shades of patriots, has gone as far as possible without the effusion of blood; but if animosities are far from subsiding, present circumstances are somewhat less menacing of a collision between the different supporters of the popular cause. As to myself, I am always the butt for attacks of all parties, because they see in my person an insurmountable obstacle to their evil designs. In the mean time, what appears to me a species of phenomenon, my popularity hitherto has not been shaken."

And in another letter, he speaks of the multiplying dangers which menaced the progress of reform in France: "The refugees hovering about the frontiers, intrigues in most of the despotic and aristocratic cabinets, our regular army divided into tory officers and undisciplined soldiers, licentiousness among the people not easily repressed, the capital, that gives the tone to the empire, tossed about by anti-revolutionary or factious parties, the Assembly fatigued by hard labor, and very unmanageable. However, according to the popular motto, *ça ira*, it will do."

When Lafayette thus wrote, faction was predominant at Paris. Liberty and equality began to be the watchwords, and the Jacobin Club had set up a journal which was spreading the spirit of revolt and preparing the fate of royalty.

"I assure you," writes Washington, "I have often contemplated, with great anxiety, the danger to which you are personally exposed by your peculiar and delicate situation in the tumult of the time, and your letters are far from quieting that friendly concern. But to one who engages in hazardous enterprises for the good of his country, and who is guided by pure and upright views, as I am sure is the case with you, life is but a secondary consideration.

"The tumultuous populace of large cities are ever to be dreaded. Their indiscriminate violence prostrates, for the time, all public authority, and its consequences are sometimes extensive and terrible. In Paris, we may suppose these tumults are peculiarly disastrous at this time, when the public mind is in a ferment, and when, as is always the case on such occasions, there are not wanting wicked and designing men whose element is confusion, and who will not hesitate in destroying the public tranquillity to gain a favorite point."

Sympathy with the popular cause prevailed with a part of Washington's cabinet. Jefferson was ardent in his wishes that



the revolution might be established. He felt, he said, that the permanence of our own revolution leaned, in some degree, on that of France; that a failure there would be a powerful argument to prove there must be a failure here, and that the success of the French revolution was necessary to stay up our own and "prevent its falling back to that kind of half-way house, the English constitution."

Outside of the cabinet, the Vice-President, John Adams, regarded the French revolution with strong distrust. His official position, however, was too negative in its nature to afford him an opportunity of exerting influence on public affairs. He considered the post of Vice-President beneath his talents. "My country," writes he, "has, in its wisdom, contrived for me the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived."<sup>1</sup> Impatient of a situation in which, as he said, he could do neither good nor evil, he resorted, for mental relief, to the press, and for upwards of a year had exercised his fertile and ever-ready pen, in furnishing *Fenno's Gazette* of the United States with a series of papers entitled, "Discourses on Davila," being an analysis of Davila's *History of the Civil Wars of France in the 16th century*. The aim of Mr. Adams, in this series, was to point out to his countrymen the dangers to be apprehended from powerful factions in ill-balanced forms of government; but his aim was mistaken, and he was charged with advocating monarchy, and laboring to prepare the way for an hereditary presidency. To counteract these "political heresies," a reprint of Paine's *Rights of Man*, written in reply to Burke's pamphlet on the French revolution, appeared under the auspices of Mr. Jefferson.

While the public mind was thus agitated with conflicting opinions, news arrived in August, of the flight of Louis XVI. from Paris, and his recapture at *Vareunes*. All Jefferson's hatred of royalty was aroused by this breach of royal faith. "Such are the fruits of that form of government," said he, scornfully, "which heaps importance on idiots, and which the Tories of the present day are trying to preach into our favor. It would be unfortunate were it in the power of any one man to defeat the issue of so beautiful a revolution. I hope and trust that it is not, and that, for the good of suffering humanity all over the earth, that revolution will be established and spread all over the world."

He was the first to communicate the intelligence to Washing-

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<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 460.

ton, who was holding one of his levees, and observes; "I never saw him so much dejected by any event in my life." Washington, himself, declares that he remained for some time in painful suspense, as to what would be the consequences of this event. Ultimately, when news arrived that the king had accepted the constitution from the hands of the National Assembly, he hailed the event as promising happy consequences to France, and to mankind in general; and what added to his joy, was the noble and disinterested part which his friend, Lafayette, had acted in this great drama. "The prayers and wishes of the human race," writes he to the marquis, "have attended the exertions of your nation; and when your affairs are settled under an energetic and equal government, the hearts of all good men will be satisfied."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

RURAL HOURS AT MOUNT VERNON — ASSEMBLING OF SECOND CONGRESS — WASHINGTON'S OPENING SPEECH — TWO EXPEDITIONS ORGANIZED AGAINST THE INDIANS, UNDER SCOTT AND WILKINSON — THEIR FEEBLE RESULT — THIRD EXPEDITION UNDER ST. CLAIR — HIS DISASTROUS CONTEST AND DISMAL RETREAT — HOW WASHINGTON RECEIVED THE INTELLIGENCE.

A FEW weeks of autumn were passed by Washington at Mount Vernon, with his family, in rural enjoyment, and in instructing a new agent, Mr. Robert Lewis, in the management of his estate; his nephew, Major George A. Washington, who ordinarily attended to his landed concerns, being absent among the mountains in quest of health.

The second Congress assembled at Philadelphia on the 24th of October, and on the 25th Washington delivered his opening speech. After remarking upon the prosperous situation of the country, and the success which had attended its financial measures, he adverted to the offensive operations against the Indians, which government had been compelled to adopt for the protection of the Western frontier. Some of these operations, he observed, had been successful, others were still depending. A brief statement will be sufficient for the successful operations alluded to. To reconcile some of the people of the West to the appointment of General St. Clair as commander-in-chief in that quarter, a local board of war had been formed for the

Western country, empowered to act in conjunction with the commanding officer of the United States, in calling out the militia, sending out expeditions against the Indians, and apporportioning scouts through the exposed parts of the district of Kentucky.

Under this arrangement two expeditions had been organized in Kentucky against the villages on the Wabash. The first, in May, was led by General Charles Scott, having General Wilkinson as second in command. The second, a volunteer enterprise, in August, was led by Wilkinson alone. Very little good was effected, or glory gained by either of these expeditions. Indian villages and wigwams were burned, and fields laid waste; some few warriors were killed and prisoners taken, and an immense expense incurred.

Of the events of a third enterprise, led by General St. Clair himself, no tidings had been received at the time of Washington's opening speech; but we will anticipate the official despatches, and proceed to show how it fared with that veteran soldier, and how far he profited by the impressive warning which he had received from the President at parting.

The troops for his expedition assembled early in September, in the vicinity of Fort Washington (now Cincinnati). There were about two thousand regulars, and one thousand militia. The regulars included a corps of artillery and several squadrons of horse. An arduous task was before them. Roads were to be opened through a wilderness; bridges constructed for the conveyance of artillery and stores, and forts to be built so as to keep up a line of communication between the Wabash and the Ohio, the base of operations. The troops commenced their march directly North, on the 6th or 7th of September, cutting their way through the woods, and slowly constructing the line of forts. The little army, on the 24th of October, according to the diary of an officer, was respectable in numbers — "upon paper" — but, adds he, "the absence of the first regiment, and desertions from the militia, had very much reduced us. With the residue there was too generally wanting the essential stamina of soldiers. Picked up and recruited from the offscourings of large towns and cities, enervated by idleness, debauchery, and every species of vice, it was impossible they could have been made competent to the arduous duties of Indian warfare. An extraordinary aversion to service was also conspicuous amongst them, and demonstrated by repeated desertions; in many instances, to the very foe we were to combat. The late period at which they had been

brought into the field, left no leisure nor opportunity to discipline them. They were, moreover, badly clothed, badly paid, and badly fed. . . . The military stores and arms were sent on in infamous order. Notwithstanding pointed orders against firing, and a penalty of one hundred lashes, game was so plenty and presented such a strong temptation, that the militia and the levies were constantly offending, to the great injury of the service and the destruction of all order in the army."<sup>1</sup>

After placing garrisons in the forts, the general continued his march. It was a forced one with him, for he was so afflicted with the gout that he could not walk, and had to be helped on and off of his horse; but his only chance to keep his little army together was to move on. A number of the Virginia troops had already, on the 27th of October, insisted on their discharges; there was danger that the whole battalion would follow their example, and the time of the other battalions was nearly up. The plan of the general was to push so far into the enemy's country, that such detachments as might be entitled to their discharges, would be afraid to return.

The army had proceeded six days after leaving Fort Jefferson, and were drawing near a part of the country where they were likely to meet with Indians, when, on the 30th of October, sixty of the militia deserted in a body; intending to supply themselves by plundering the convoys of provisions which were coming forward in the rear. The first United States regiment, under Major Hamtranck, was detached to march back beyond Fort Jefferson, apprehend these deserters, if possible, and, at all events, prevent the provisions that might be on the way, from being rifled. The force thus detached, consisted of three hundred of the best disciplined men in the service, with experienced officers.

Thus reduced to 1,400 effective rank and file, the army continued its march to a point about twenty-nine miles from Fort Jefferson, and ninety-seven from Fort Washington, and fifteen miles south of the Miami villages, where it encamped, November 3, on a rising ground with a stream forty feet wide in front, running westerly. This stream was mistaken by General St. Clair for the St. Mary, which empties itself into the Miami of the lakes; but it was, in fact, a tributary of the Wabash.

A number of new and old Indian camps showed that this

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<sup>1</sup> Diary of Colonel Winthrop Sargent, Adjutant-General of the U. S. army during the campaign of 1791.

had been a place of general resort; and in the bends of the stream were tracks of a party of fifteen, horse and foot; a scouting party most probably, which must have quitted the ground just before the arrival of the army.

The troops were encamped in two lines, the right wing composed of Butler, Clarke, and Patterson's battalions, commanded by Major-General Butler, forming the first line; Patterson on the right; and four pieces of artillery on the right of Butler. The left wing, consisting of Beddinger and Gaiher's battalions, and the second United States regiment, commanded by Colonel Darke, formed the second line; with an interval of about seventy yards, which was all that the ground allowed. The length of the lines was nearly four hundred yards; the rear somewhat more, and the front somewhat less. A troop of horse, commanded by Captain Truman, and a company of riflemen under Captain Faulkner, were upon the right flank, and Snowden's troop of horse on the left.

The ground descended gradually in front of the encampment to the stream, which, at this time, was fordable, and meandered in its course; in some places, one hundred yards distant from the camp, in others not more than twenty-five. The immediate spot of the encampment was very defensible against regular troops; but it was surrounded by close woods, dense thickets, and trunks of fallen trees, with here and there a ravine, and a small swamp—all the best kind of cover for stealthy Indian warfare.

The militia were encamped beyond the stream about a quarter of a mile in the advance, on a high flat; a much more favorable position than that occupied by the main body; and capacious enough to have accommodated the whole, and admitted any extent of lines.

It was the intention of St. Clair to throw up a slight work on the following day, and to move on to the attack of the Indian villages as soon as he should be rejoined by Major Hamtranck and the first United States regiment. The plan of this work he concerted in the evening with Major Ferguson of the artillery, a cool, indefatigable, determined man. In the mean time, Colonel Oldham, the commanding officer of the militia, was directed to send out two detachments that evening, to explore the country and gain information concerning the enemy. The militia, however, showed signs of insubordination. They complained of being too much fatigued for the purpose; in short, the service was not, and probably could not be enforced. Sentinels posted around the camp,

about fifty paces distant from each other, formed the principal security.

About half an hour before sunrise on the next morning (November 4), and just after the troops had been dismissed on parade, a horrible sound burst forth from the woods around the militia camp, resembling, says an officer, the jangling of an infinitude of horse-bells. It was the direful Indian yell, followed by the sharp reports of the deadly rifle. The militia returned a feeble fire, and then took to flight, dashing helter-skelter into the other camp. The first line of the Continental troops, which was hastily forming, was thrown into disorder. The Indians were close upon the heels of the flying militia, and would have entered the camp with them, but the sight of troops drawn up with fixed bayonets to receive them, checked their ardor, and they threw themselves behind logs and bushes at the distance of seventy yards; and immediately commenced an attack upon the first line, which soon was extended to the second. The great weight of the attack was upon the centre of each line where the artillery was placed. The artillery, if not well served, was bravely fought; a quantity of canister and some round shot were thrown in the direction whence the Indians fired; but, concealed as they were, and only seen occasionally as they sprang from one covert to another, it was impossible to direct the pieces to advantage. The artillerists themselves were exposed to a murderous fire, and every officer, and more than two-thirds of the men, were killed and wounded. Twice the Indians pushed into the camp, delivering their fire and then rushing on with the tomahawk, but each time they were driven back. General Butler had been shot from his horse, and was sitting down to have his wound dressed, when a daring savage, darting into the camp, tomahawked and scalped him. He failed to carry off his trophy, being instantly slain.

The veteran St. Clair, who, unable to mount his horse, was borne about on a litter, preserved his coolness in the midst of the peril and disaster, giving his orders with judgment and self-possession. Seeing to what disadvantage his troops fought with a concealed enemy, he ordered Colonel Darke, with his regiment of regulars, to rouse the Indians from their covert with the bayonet, and turn their left flank. This was executed with great spirit: the enemy were driven three or four hundred yards; but, for want of cavalry or riflemen, the pursuit slackened, and the troops were forced to give back in turn. The savages had now got into the camp by the left flank;

again several charges were made, but in vain. Great carnage was suffered from the enemy concealed in the woods; every shot seemed to take effect; all the officers of the second regiment were picked off, excepting three. The contest had now endured for more than two hours and a half. The spirits of the troops flagged under the loss of the officers; half the army was killed, and the situation of the remainder was desperate. There appeared to be no alternative but a retreat.

At half-past nine, General St. Clair ordered Colonel Darke, with the second regiment, to make another charge, as if to turn the right wing of the enemy, but, in fact, to regain the road from which the army was cut off. This object was effected. "Having collected in one body the greatest part of the troops," writes one of the officers, "and such of the wounded as could possibly hobble along with us, we pushed out from the left of the rear line, sacrificing our artillery and baggage." Some of the wounded officers were brought off on horses, but several of the disabled men had to be left on the ground. The poor fellows charged their pieces before they were left: and the firing of musketry heard by the troops after they quitted the camp, told that their unfortunate comrades were selling their lives dear.

It was a disorderly flight. The troops threw away arms, ammunition, and accoutrements; even the officers, in some instances, divested themselves of their fuses. The general was mounted on a pack horse which could not be pricked out of a walk. Fortunately, the enemy did not pursue above a mile or two, returning, most probably, to plunder the camp.

By seven in the evening, the fugitives reached Fort Jefferson, a distance of twenty-nine miles. Here they met Major Hamtranck with the first regiment; but, as this force was far from sufficient to make up for the losses of the morning, the retreat was continued to Fort Washington, where the army arrived on the 8th at noon, shattered and broken-spirited. Many poor fellows fell behind in the retreat, and fancying the savages were upon them, left the road, and some of them were wandering several days, until nearly starved.

In this disastrous battle the whole loss of regular troops and levies amounted to five hundred and fifty killed, and two hundred wounded. Out of ninety-five commissioned officers who were on the field, thirty-one were slain and twenty-four wounded. Of the three hundred and nineteen militia, Colonel Oldham and three other officers were killed and five wounded; and of non-commissioned officers and privates, thirty-eight were

killed and twenty-nine wounded. Fourteen artificers and ten pack-horse men were also killed, and thirteen wounded. So that, according to Colonel Sargent's estimate, the whole loss amounted to six hundred and seventy-seven killed, including thirty women, and two hundred and seventy-one wounded.

Poor St. Clair's defeat has been paralleled with that of Braddock. No doubt, when he realized the terrible havoc that had been made, he thought sadly of Washington's parting words, "Beware of a surprise!"

We have a graphic account of the manner in which the intelligence of the disaster was received by Washington at Philadelphia. Towards the close of a winter's day in December, an officer in uniform dismounted in front of the President's house, and, giving the bridle to his servant, knocked at the door. He was informed by the porter that the President was at dinner and had company. The officer was not to be denied; he was on public business, he brought despatches for the President. A servant was sent into the dining-room to communicate the matter to Mr. Lear. The latter left the table and went into the hall, where the officer repeated what he had said to the porter. Mr. Lear, as secretary of the President, offered to take charge of the despatches and deliver them at the proper time. The officer replied that he was just arrived from the Western army; his orders were to deliver the despatches promptly to the President in person: but that he would wait his directions. Mr. Lear returned, and, in a whisper, communicated to the President what had passed. Washington rose from the table and went into the hall, whence he returned in a short time and resumed his seat, apologizing for his absence, but without alluding to the cause of it. One of the company, however, overheard him, as he took his seat, mutter to himself, with an ejaculation of extreme impatience, "I knew it would be so!"

Mrs. Washington held her drawing-room that evening. The gentlemen repaired thither from the table. Washington appeared there with his usual serenity; speaking courteously to every lady, as was his custom. By ten o'clock all the company had gone; Mrs. Washington retired soon after, and Washington and his secretary alone remained.

The general walked slowly backward and forward for some minutes in silence. As yet there had been no change in his manner. Taking a seat on a sofa by the fire he told Mr. Lear to sit down; the latter had scarce time to notice that he was extremely agitated, when he broke out suddenly: "It's all over! — St. Clair's defeated! — routed: the officers nearly all



killed, the men by wholesale; the rout complete; too shocking to think of, and a surprise into the bargain!" All this was uttered with great vehemence. Then pausing and rising from the sofa, he walked up and down the room in silence, violently agitated, but saying nothing. When near the door he stopped short; stood still for a few moments, when there was another terrible explosion of wrath.

"Yes," exclaimed he, "HERE, on this very spot, I took leave of him; I wished him success and honor. 'You have your instructions from the Secretary of War,' said I, 'I had a strict eye to them, and will add but one word, BEWARE OF A SURPRISE! You know how the Indians fight us. I repeat it, BEWARE OF A SURPRISE.' He went off with that, my last warning, thrown into his ears. And yet! To suffer that army to be cut to pieces, hacked, butchered, tomahawked, by a surprise — the very thing I guarded him against — O God! O God!" exclaimed he, throwing up his hands, and while his very frame shook with emotion, "he's worse than a murderer! How can he answer it to his country! The blood of the slain is upon him — the curse of widows and orphans — the curse of heaven!"

Mr. Lear remained speechless; awed into breathless silence by the appalling tones in which this torrent of invective was poured forth. The paroxysm passed by. Washington again sat down on the sofa — he was silent — apparently uncomfortable, as if conscious of the ungovernable burst of passion which had overcome him. "This must not go beyond this room," said he at length, in a subdued and altered tone — there was another and a longer pause; then, in a tone quite low: "General St. Clair shall have justice," said he. "I looked hastily through the despatches; saw the whole disaster, but not all the particulars. I will receive him without displeasure; I will hear him without prejudice; he shall have full justice."<sup>1</sup>

Washington had recovered his equanimity. "The storm," we are told, "was over, and no sign of it was afterwards seen in his conduct or heard in his conversation." How well he kept his word, in regard to General St. Clair, will hereafter be shown.

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<sup>1</sup> Rush's Washington in Domestic Life.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

THE APPORTIONMENT BILL — WASHINGTON'S VETO — HIS CONCERN AT THE GROWING ASPERITIES OF CONGRESS — INTENDED RETIREMENT — JEFFERSON'S DETERMINATION TO RETIRE AT THE SAME TIME — REMONSTRANCE OF WASHINGTON — HIS REQUEST TO MADISON TO PREPARE VALEDICTORY — WAYNE APPOINTED TO SUCCEED ST. CLAIR — CONGRESS ADJOURNS — WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON — SUGGESTS TOPICS FOR HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS — MADISON'S DRAFT — JEFFERSON URGES HIS CONTINUANCE.

IN the course of the present session of Congress a bill was introduced for apportioning representatives among the people of the several States, according to the first enumeration.

The constitution had provided that the number of representatives should not exceed one for every thirty thousand persons, and the House of Representatives passed a bill allotting to each State one member for this amount of population. This ratio would leave a fraction, greater or less, in each State. Its operation was unequal, as in some States a large surplus would be unrepresented, and hence, in one branch of the legislature, the relative power of the State be affected. That, too, was the popular branch, which those who feared a strong executive, desired to provide with the counterpoise of as full a representation as possible.

To obviate this difficulty the Senate adopted a new principle of apportionment. They assumed the total population of the United States, and not the population of each State, as the basis on which the whole number of representatives should be ascertained. This aggregate they divided by thirty thousand: the quotient gave one hundred and twenty as the number of representatives; and this number they apportioned upon the several States according to their population; allotting to each one member for every thirty thousand, and distributing the residuary members (to make up the one hundred and twenty) among the States having the largest fractions.

After an earnest debate, the House concurred, and the bill came before the President for his decision. The sole question was as to its constitutionality; that being admitted, it was unexceptionable. Washington took the opinion of his cabinet. Jefferson and Randolph considered the act at variance with

the constitution. Knox was undecided. Hamilton thought the clause of the constitution relating to the subject somewhat vague, and was in favor of the construction given to it by the legislature.

After weighing the arguments on both sides, and maturely deliberating, the President made up his mind that the act was unconstitutional. It was the obvious intention of the constitution to apply the ratio of representation according to the separate numbers of each State, and not to the aggregate of the population of the United States. Now this bill allotted to eight of the States more than one representative for thirty thousand inhabitants. He accordingly returned the bill with his objections, being the first exercise of the veto power. A new bill was substituted, and passed into a law; giving a representative for every thirty-three thousand to each State.

Great heat and asperity were manifested in the discussions of Congress throughout the present session. Washington had observed with pain the political divisions which were growing up in the country; and was deeply concerned at finding that they were pervading the halls of legislation. The press, too, was contributing its powerful aid to keep up and increase the irritation. Two rival papers existed at the seat of government; one was Fenno's Gazette of the United States, in which John Adams had published his "Discourses on Davila;" the other was the National Gazette, edited by Philip Freneau. Freneau had been editor of the New York Daily Advertiser, but had come to Philadelphia in the autumn of 1791 to occupy the post of translating clerk in Mr. Jefferson's office, and had almost immediately (October 31) published the first number of his Gazette. Notwithstanding his situation in the office of the Secretary of State, Freneau became and continued to be throughout the session, a virulent assailant of most of the measures of government; excepting such as originated with Mr. Jefferson, or were approved by him.

Heart-weary by the political strifes and disagreements which were disturbing the country and marring the harmony of his cabinet, the charge of government was becoming intolerably irksome to Washington; and he longed to be released from it, and to be once more master of himself, free to indulge those rural and agricultural tastes which were to give verdure and freshness to his future existence. He had some time before this expressed a determination to retire from public life at the end of his Presidential term. But one more year of that term remained to be endured; he was congratulating himself with

the thought, when Mr. Jefferson intimated that it was his intention to retire from office at the same time with himself.

Washington was exceedingly discomposed by this determination. Jefferson, in his *Anas*, assures us that the President remonstrated with him against it, "in an affectionate tone." For his own part, he observed, many motives compelled him to retire. It was only after much pressing that he had consented to take a part in the new government and get it under way. Were he to continue in it longer, it might give room to say that, having tasted the sweets of office, he could not do without them.

He observed, moreover, to Jefferson, that he really felt himself growing old; that his bodily health was less firm, and his memory, always bad, was becoming worse. The other faculties of his mind, perhaps, might be evincing to others a decay of which he himself might be insensible. This apprehension, he said, particularly oppressed him.

His activity, too, had declined; business was consequently more irksome, and the longing for tranquillity and retirement had become an irresistible passion. For these reasons he felt himself obliged, he said, to retire; yet he should consider it unfortunate if, in so doing, he should bring on the retirement of the great officers of government, which might produce a shock on the public mind of a dangerous consequence.

Jefferson, in reply, stated the reluctance with which he himself had entered upon public employment, and the resolution he had formed on accepting his station in the cabinet, to make the resignation of the President the epoch of his own retirement from labors of which he was heartily tired. He did not believe, however, that any of his brethren in the administration had any idea of retiring; on the contrary, he had perceived, at a late meeting of the trustees of the sinking fund, that the Secretary of the Treasury had developed the plan he intended to pursue, and that it embraced years in its view.

Washington rejoined, that he considered the Treasury department a limited one, going only to the single object of revenue, while that of the Secretary of State, embracing nearly all the objects of administration, was much more important, and the retirement of the officer, therefore, would be more noticed; that though the government had set out with a pretty general good-will, yet that symptoms of dissatisfaction had lately shown themselves, far beyond what he could have expected; and to what height these might arise, in case of too great a change in the administration, could not be foreseen.

Jefferson availed himself of this opportunity to have a thrust at his political rival. "I told him" (the President), relates he, "that in my opinion there was only a single source of these discontents. Though they had, indeed, appeared to spread themselves over the War Department also, yet I considered that as an overflowing only from their real channel, which would never have taken place if they had not first been generated in another department, to wit, that of the Treasury. That a system had there been contrived for deluging the States with paper money instead of gold and silver, for withdrawing our citizens from the pursuits of commerce, manufactures, buildings, and other branches of useful industry, to occupy themselves and their capitals in a species of gambling, destructive to morality, and which had introduced its poison into the government itself."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Jefferson went on, in the same strain, to comment at large upon the measures of Mr. Hamilton, but records no reply of importance on the part of Washington, whose object in seeking the conversation had been merely to persuade his Secretary to remain in the cabinet; and who had no relish for the censorious comments to which it had given rise.

Yet with all this political rivalry, Jefferson has left on record his appreciation of the sterling merit of Hamilton. In his *Anas*, he speaks of him as "of acute understanding, disinterested, honest, and honorable in all private transactions; amiable in society, and duly valuing virtue in private life. Yet so bewitched and pervaded by the British example, as to be under thorough conviction that corruption was essential to the government of a nation."

In support of this sweeping exception to Mr. Hamilton's political orthodoxy, Mr. Jefferson gives, in his *Anas*, a conversation which occurred between that gentleman and Mr. Adams, at his (Mr. Jefferson's) table, *after the cloth was removed*. "Conversation," writes he, "began on other matters, and by some circumstance was led to the British constitution, on which Mr. Adams observed, 'purge that constitution of its corruption, and give to its popular branch equality of representation, and it would be the most perfect constitution ever devised by the wit of man.' Hamilton paused and said, 'purge it of its corruption, and give to its popular branch equality of representation, and it would become an *impracticable* government; as it stands at present, with all its sup-

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, ix. 102.

posed defects, it is the most perfect government which ever existed.' ”<sup>1</sup>

This after-dinner conversation appears to us very loose ground on which to found the opinion continually expressed by Mr. Jefferson, that “Mr. Hamilton was not only a monarchist, but for a monarchy bottomed on corruption.”

Subsequent to Washington’s remonstrance with Mr. Jefferson above cited, he had confidential conversations with Mr. Madison on the subject of his intended retirement from office at the end of the presidential term, and asked him to think what would be the proper time and mode of announcing his intention to the public; and intimating a wish that Mr. Madison would prepare for him the announcement.

Mr. Madison remonstrated in the most earnest manner against such a resolution, setting forth, in urgent language, the importance to the country of his continuing in the presidency. Washington listened to his reasoning with profound attention, but still clung to his resolution.

In consequence of St. Clair’s disastrous defeat and the increasing pressure of the Indian war, bills had been passed in Congress for increasing the army, by adding three regiments of infantry and a squadron of cavalry (which additional force was to serve for three years, unless sooner discharged), also for establishing a uniform militia system.

The question now came up as to the appointment of an officer to command in the Western frontier. General St. Clair in a letter to Washington, expressed a wish that a court of inquiry might be instituted to investigate his conduct in the late expedition. “Your desire,” replied Washington, March 28, “of rectifying any errors of the public opinion relative to your conduct, by an investigation of a court of inquiry, is highly laudable, and would be readily complied with, were the measure practicable. But a total deficiency of officers in actual service, of competent rank to form a legal court for that purpose, precludes the power of gratifying your wishes on this occasion.

“The intimation of your wishes to afford your successor all the information of which you are capable, although unnecessary for my personal conviction, must be regarded as an additional evidence of the goodness of your heart, and of your attachment to your country.”

In a letter dated March 31, St. Clair urged reasons for

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson’s Works, vol. ix. p. 96.

being permitted to retain his commission "until an opportunity should be presented, if necessary, of investigating his conduct in every mode presented by law."

These reasons, Washington replied, would be conclusive with him under any other circumstances than the present. "But the establishment of the troops," observes he, "allows only of one major-general. You have manifested your intention of retiring, and the essential interests of the public require that your successor should be immediately appointed, in order to repair to the frontiers.

"As the House of Representatives have been pleased to institute an inquiry into the causes of the failure of the late expedition, I should hope an opportunity would thereby be afforded you of explaining your conduct in a manner satisfactory to the public and yourself."

St. Clair resigned his commission, and was succeeded in his Western command by General Wayne, the Mad Anthony of the Revolution, still in the vigor of his days, being forty-seven years of age. "He has many good points as an officer," writes Washington, "and it is to be hoped that time, reflection, good advice, and, above all, a due sense of the importance of the trust which is committed to him, will correct his foibles, or cast a shade over them."<sup>1</sup>

Washington's first thought was that a decisive expedition conducted by this energetic man of the sword, might retrieve the recent frontier disgrace, and put an end to the persevering hostility of the Indians. In deference, however, to the clamors which had been raised against the war and its expenses, and to meet what appeared to be the prevalent wish of the nation, he reluctantly relinquished his more energetic policy, and gave in to that which advised further negotiations for peace; though he was far from anticipating a beneficial result.

In regard to St. Clair, we will here add: that a committee of the House of Representatives ultimately inquired into the cause of the failure of his expedition, and rendered a report, in which he was explicitly exculpated. His adjutant-general also (Winthrop Sargent), in his private diary, testifies to St. Clair's coolness and bravery, though debilitated by illness. Public sentiment, however, remained for a long time adverse to him; but Washington, satisfied with the explanations which had been given, continued to honor him with his confidence and friendship.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Governor Lee. Washington's Writings, x. 248.

Congress adjourned on the 8th of May, and soon afterward Washington set off on a short visit to Mount Vernon. The season was in all its beauty, and never had this rallying place of his affections appeared to him more attractive. How could he give up the prospect of a speedy return to his genial pursuits and pleasures from the harassing cares and janglings of public life. On the 20th of May, he wrote to Mr. Madison on the subject of their late conversation. "I have not been unmindful," says he, "of the sentiments expressed by you. On the contrary, I have again and again revolved them with thoughtful anxiety, but without being able to dispose my mind to a longer continuation in the office I have now the honor to hold. I, therefore, still look forward with the fondest and most ardent wishes to spend the remainder of my days, which I cannot expect to be long, in ease and tranquillity."

He now renewed the request he had made Mr. Madison, for advice as to the proper time and mode for announcing his intention of retiring, and for assistance in preparing the announcement. "In revolving this subject myself," writes he, "my judgment has always been embarrassed. On the one hand, a previous declaration to retire, not only carries with it the appearance of vanity and self-importance, but it may be construed into a manœuvre to be invited to remain; and, on the other hand, to say nothing, implies consent, or, at any rate, would leave the matter in doubt; and to decline afterwards might be deemed as bad and uncandid."

"I would fain carry my request to you further," adds he. "As the recess [of Congress] may afford you leisure, and, I flatter myself, you have dispositions to oblige me, I will, without apology, desire, if the measure in itself should strike you as proper, or likely to produce public good, or private honor, that you would turn your thoughts to a valedictory address from me to the public."

He then went on to suggest a number of the topics and ideas which the address was to contain; all to be expressed in "plain and modest terms." But, in the main, he left it to Mr. Madison to determine whether, in the first place, such an address would be proper; if so, what matters it ought to contain, and when it ought to appear; whether at the same time with his [Washington's] declaration of his intention to retire, or at the close of his career.

Madison, in reply, approved of the measure, and advised that the notification and address should appear together, and be promulgated through the press in time to pervade every part



of the Union by the beginning of November. With the letter he sent a draft of the address. "You will readily observe," writes he, "that, in executing it, I have aimed at that plainness and modesty of language, which you had in view, and which, indeed, are so peculiarly becoming the character and the occasion; and that I had little more to do as to the matter, than to follow the just and comprehensive outline which you had sketched. I flatter myself, however, that, in every thing which has depended on me, much improvement will be made, before so interesting a paper shall have taken its last form."<sup>1</sup>

Before concluding his letter, Madison expressed a hope that Washington would reconsider his idea of retiring from office, and that the country might not, at so important a conjuncture, be deprived of the inestimable advantage of having him at the head of its councils.

On the 23d of May, Jefferson also addressed a long letter to Washington on the same subject. "When you first mentioned to me your purpose of retiring from the government, though I felt all the magnitude of the event, I was in a considerable degree silent. I knew that, to such a mind as yours, persuasion was idle and impertinent; that, before forming your decision, you had weighed all the reasons for and against the measure, had made up your mind in full view of them, and that there could be little hope of changing the result. Pursuing my reflections, too, I knew we were some day to try to walk alone, and, if the essay should be made while you should be alive and looking on, we should derive confidence from that circumstance, and resource if it failed. The public mind, too, was then calm and confident, and therefore in a favorable state for making the experiment. But the public mind is no longer so confident and serene; and that from causes in which you are no ways personally mixed."

Jefferson now launched out against the public debt and all the evils which he apprehended from the funding system, the ultimate object of all which was, said he, "to prepare the way for a change from the present republican form of government to that of a monarchy, of which the English constitution is to be the model." He concluded by pronouncing the continuance of Washington at the head of affairs, to be of the last importance.

"The confidence of the whole Union," writes he, "is centred in you. Your being at the helm will be more than an

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings, Sparks, xii. 382.

answer to every argument which can be used to alarm and lead the people in any quarter into violence or secession. North and South will hang together, if they have you to hang on; and, if the first corrective of a numerous representation should fail in its effect, your presence will give time for trying others not inconsistent with the union and peace of the States.

“I am perfectly aware of the oppression under which your present office lays your mind, and of the ardor with which you pant for retirement to domestic life. But there is sometimes an eminence of character on which society have such peculiar claims, as to control the predilections of the individual for a particular walk of happiness, and restrain him to that alone, arising from the present and future benedictions of mankind. This seems to be your condition, and the law imposed on you by Providence, in forming your character, and fashioning the events on which it was to operate; and it is to motives like these, and not to personal anxieties of mine or others, who have no right to call on you for sacrifices, that I appeal from your former determination and urge a revisal of it, on the ground of change in the aspect of things. Should an honest majority result from the new and enlarged representation, should those acquiesce, whose principles or interests they may control, your wishes for retirement would be gratified with less danger, as soon as that shall be manifest, without awaiting the completion of the second period of four years. One or two sessions will determine the crisis; and I cannot but hope, that you can resolve to add one or two more to the many years you have already sacrificed to the good of mankind.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, x. 508.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

JEFFERSON'S SUSPICION — CONTEMNED BY HAMILTON — WASHINGTON'S EXPOSTULATION — COMPLAINTS OF THE CONDUCT OF FRENEAU'S PAPER — HAMILTON AND RANDOLPH URGE HIM TO A RE-ELECTION — A WARRING CABINET — HAMILTON'S ATTACK ON JEFFERSON — WASHINGTON'S HEALING ADMONITIONS — REPLIES OF THE TWO SECRETARIES — CONTINUED HOSTILITY TO THE EXCISE LAW — WASHINGTON'S PROCLAMATION — RENEWED EFFORT TO ALLAY THE DISCORD IN HIS CABINET.

THE letter of Jefferson was not received by Washington until after his return to Philadelphia, and the purport of it was so painful to him, that he deferred from day to day having any conversation with that statesman on the subject. A letter written in the mean time, by Jefferson to Lafayette, shows the predominant suspicion, or rather belief, which had fixed itself in the mind of the former, and was shaping his course of action.

"A sect," writes he, "has shown itself among us, who declare they espoused our Constitution not as a good and sufficient thing in itself, but only as a step to an English constitution, the only thing good and sufficient in itself, in their eyes. It is happy for us that these are preachers without followers, and that our people are firm and constant in their republican purity. You will wonder to be told that it is from the eastward chiefly, that these champions for a king, lords, and commons, come. They get some important associates from New York, and are puffed up by a tribe of Agioteurs which have been hatched in a bed of corruption, made up after the model of their beloved England. Too many of these stock-jobbers and king-jobbers have come into our legislature, or rather, too many of our legislature have become stock-jobbers and king-jobbers. However, the voice of the people is beginning to make itself heard, and will probably cleanse their seats at the next election."<sup>1</sup>

In regard to the suspicions and apprehensions avowed in the above letter, and which apparently were haunting Jefferson's mind, Hamilton expressed himself roundly in one of his cabinet papers:

"The idea of introducing a monarchy or aristocracy into

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, iii. 450.

this country, by employing the influence and force of a government continually changing hands, towards it, is one of those visionary things that none but madmen could meditate, and that no wise man will believe. If it could be done at all, which is utterly incredible, it would require a long series of time, certainly beyond the life of any individual, to effect it — who, then, would enter into such a plot? for what purpose of interest or ambition?"

And as to the charge of stock-gambling in the legislature, Hamilton indignantly writes: "As far as I know, there is not a member of the legislature who can properly be called a stock-jobber or a paper-dealer. There are several of them who were proprietors of public debts, in various ways; some for money lent and property furnished for the use of the public during the war, others for sums received in payment of debts, and it is supposable enough that some of them had been purchasers of the public debt, with intention to hold it as a valuable and convenient property, considering an honorable provision for it as a matter of course.

"It is a strange perversion of ideas, and as novel as it is extraordinary, that men should be deemed corrupt and criminal for becoming proprietors in the funds of their country. Yet, I believe the number of members of Congress is very small, who have ever been considerable proprietors in the funds. As to improper speculations on measures depending before Congress, I believe never was any body of men freer from them."<sup>1</sup>

On the 10th of July, Washington had a conversation with Jefferson on the subject of the letter he had recently received from him; and endeavored with his usual supervising and moderating assiduity to allay the jealousies and suspicions which were disturbing the mind of that ardent politician. These, he intimated, had been carried a great deal too far. There might be *desires*, he said, among a few in the higher walks of life, particularly in the great cities, to change the form of government into a monarchy, but he did not believe there were any *designs*; and he believed the main body of the people in the Eastern States were as steadily for republicanism as in the Southern.

He now spoke with earnestness about articles in the public papers, especially in the Gazette edited by Frencau, the object of which seemed to be to excite opposition to the government, and which had actually excited it in Pennsylvania, in regard

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's Works, iv. 268.

to the excise law. "These articles," said he, feelingly, "tend to produce a separation of the Union, *the most dreadful of calamities*; and whatever tends to produce anarchy, tends, of course, to produce a resort to monarchical government."

The articles in question had, it is true, been chiefly levelled at the Treasury department, but Washington accepted no immunity from attacks pointed at any department of his government; assuming that they were aimed directly at himself. "In condemning the administration of the government, they condemned me," said he, "for, if they thought these were measures pursued contrary to my sentiments, they must conceive me too careless to attend to them or too stupid to understand them."

He acknowledged, indeed, that he had signed many acts of which he did not approve in all their parts; but never had he put his hand to one which he did not think eligible, on the whole.

As to the bank which had been so much complained of, he observed, that, until there was some infallible criterion of reason, a difference of opinion must be tolerated. He did not believe the discontents extended far from the seat of government. He had seen and spoken with many people in Maryland and Virginia in his late journey, and had found them contented and happy.

Jefferson's observations in reply tended, principally, to iterate and enforce what he had already urged in his letter. The two great popular complaints were, he said, that the national debt was unnecessarily increased by the Assumption, and that it had furnished the means of corrupting both branches of the legislature. In both Houses there was a considerable squadron whose votes were devoted to the paper and stock-jobbing interest. On examining the votes of these men they would be found uniformly for every treasury measure, and as most of these measures had been carried by small majorities, they had been carried by these very votes. It was a cause of just uneasiness, therefore, when we saw a legislature legislating for their own interests in opposition to those of the people.

"Washington," observes Jefferson, "said not a word on the corruption of the legislature." He probably did not feel disposed to contend against what he may have considered jealous suspicions and deductions. But he took up the other point and defended the Assumption, agreeing, says Jefferson, that it had not increased the debt, *for that all of it was honest debt*.

He justified the excise law, too, as one of the best laws that

could be passed, as nobody would pay the tax who did not choose to do it.

We give this conversation as noted down by Jefferson in his *Anas*. It is one of the very few instances we have of Washington's informal discussions with the members of his cabinet, and it bears the stamp of that judgment, consideration, delicacy, and good faith which enabled him to moderate and manage the wayward passions and impulses of able men.

Hamilton was equally strenuous with Jefferson in urging upon Washington the policy of a re-election, as it regarded the public good, and wrote to him fully on the subject. It was the opinion of every one, he alleged, with whom he had conversed, that the affairs of the national government were not yet firmly established; that its enemies, generally speaking, were as inveterate as ever; that their enmity had been sharpened by its success and all the resentments which flow from disappointed predictions and mortified vanity; that a general and strenuous effort was making in every State to place the administration of it in the hands of its enemies, as if they were its safest guardians; that the period of the next House of Representatives was likely to prove the crisis of its national character; that if Washington continued in office, nothing materially mischievous was to be apprehended; but, if he should quit, much was to be dreaded; that the same motives which had induced him to accept originally, ought to decide him to continue till matters had assumed a more determinate aspect; that, indeed, it would have been better as it regarded his own character, that he had never consented to come forward, than now to leave the business unfinished and in danger of being undone; that in the event of storms arising, there would be an imputation either of want of foresight or want of firmness; and, in fine, that on public and personal accounts, on patriotic and prudential considerations, the clear path to be pursued by him would be again to obey the voice of his country; which, it was not doubted, would be as earnest and as unanimous as ever.

In concluding his letter, Hamilton observes, "The sentiments I have delivered upon this occasion, I can truly say, proceed exclusively from an anxious concern for the public welfare and an affectionate personal attachment."

Mr. Edmund Randolph also, after a long letter on the "jeopardy of the Union," which seemed to him "at the eve of a crisis," adds: "The fuel which has been already gathered

for combustion wants no addition. But how awfully might it be increased, were the violence, which is now suspended by a universal submission to your pretensions, let loose by your resignation. Permit me, then, in the fervor of a dutiful and affectionate attachment to you, to beseech you to penetrate the consequence of a dereliction of the reins. The constitution would never have been adopted but from a knowledge that you had once sanctioned it, and an expectation that you would execute it. It is in a state of probation. The most inauspicious struggles are past, but the public deliberations need stability. You alone can give them stability. You suffered yourself to yield when the voice of your country summoned you to the administration. Should a civil war arise, you cannot stay at home. And how much easier will it be to disperse the factions, which are rushing to this catastrophe, than to subdue them after they shall appear in arms? It is the fixed opinion of the world, that you surrender nothing incomplete."<sup>1</sup>

Not the cabinet, merely, divided as it was in its political opinions, but all parties, however discordant in other points, concurred in a desire that Washington should continue in office — so truly was he regarded as the choice of the nation.

But though the cabinet was united in feeling on this one subject, in other respects its dissensions were increasing in virulence. Hamilton, aggrieved by the attacks made in Freneau's paper upon his funding and banking system, his duty on home-made spirits, and other points of his financial policy, and upon himself, by holding him up as a monarchist at heart, and considering these attacks as originating in the hostility of Freneau's patron, Mr. Jefferson, addressed a note signed T. L. to the editor of the Gazette of the United States, in which he observed that the editor of the National Gazette received a salary from government, adding the significant query — whether this salary was paid him for translations or for publications, the design of which was to vilify those to whom the voice of the people had committed the administration of our public affairs, to oppose the measures of government, and, by false insinuations, to disturb the public peace? "In common life it is thought ungrateful for a man to bite the hand that puts bread in his mouth; but, if the man is hired to do it, the case is altered."

In another article, dated August 4, Mr. Hamilton, under

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings, x. 514.

the signature of "An American," gave some particulars of the negotiations which ended in the establishment of the National Gazette, devoted to the interests of a certain party, of which Mr. Jefferson was the head. "An experiment," said he, "somewhat new in the history of political manœuvres in this country; a newspaper instituted by a public officer, and the editor of it regularly pensioned with the public money in the disposal of that officer. . . . But, it may be asked—is it possible that Mr. Jefferson, the head of a principal department of the government, can be the patron of a paper, the evident object of which is to decry the government and its measures? If he disapproves of the government itself, and thinks it deserving of his opposition, can he reconcile it to his own personal dignity and the principles of probity, to hold an office under it, and employ the means of official influence in that opposition? If he disapproves of the leading measures which have been adopted in the course of his administration, can he reconcile it with the principles of delicacy and propriety, to hold a place in that administration, and at the same time to be instrumental in vilifying measures which have been adopted by majorities of both branches of the legislature, *and sanctioned by the chief magistrate of the Union?*"

This attack brought out an affidavit from Mr. Freneau, in which he declares that his coming to Philadelphia was his own voluntary act; that, as an editor of a newspaper, he had never been urged, advised, or influenced by Mr. Jefferson, and that not a single line of his Gazette was ever directly or indirectly written, dictated, or composed for it, by the Secretary of State.

Washington had noticed this growing feud with excessive pain, and at length found it necessary to interfere and attempt a reconciliation between the warring parties. In the course of a letter to Jefferson (August 23), on the subject of Indian hostilities, and the possibility of their being furnished by foreign agents to check, as far as possible, the rapid increase, extension, and consequence of the United States, "How unfortunate then," observes he, "and how much to be regretted that, while we are encompassed on all sides with armed enemies and insidious friends, internal dissension should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The latter, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and without more charity for the opinions and acts of one another in governmental matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the



test of experience, are to be prejudged, than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult, if not impracticable, to manage the reins of government, or to keep the parts of it together; for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine after measures are decided on, one pulls this way and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn asunder; and, in my opinion, the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man, will be lost perhaps forever.

"My earnest wish and fondest hope, therefore, is, that instead of wounding suspicions and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporizing yieldings on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, every thing must rub; the wheels of government will clog; our enemies will triumph, and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting."

Admonitions to the same purport were addressed by him to Hamilton. "Having premised these things," adds he, "I would fain hope that liberal allowances will be made for the political opinions of each other; and, instead of those wounding suspicions and irritating charges, with which some of our gazettes are so strongly impregnated, and which cannot fail, if persevered in, of pushing matters to extremity, and thereby tearing the machine asunder, that there may be mutual forbearance and temporizing yielding *on all sides*. Without these I do not see how the reins of government are to be managed, or how the Union of the States can be much longer preserved." . . .

"I do not mean to apply this advice to any measures which are passed, or to any particular character. I have given it in the same *general* terms to other officers of the government. My earnest wish is, that balsam may be poured into *all* the wounds which have been given, to prevent them from gangrening, and from those fatal consequences, which the community may sustain if it is withheld."<sup>1</sup>

Hamilton was prompt and affectionate in his reply, expressing sincere regret at the circumstances which had given rise to the uneasy sensations experienced by Washington. "It is my most anxious wish," writes he, "as far as may depend upon me, to smooth the path of your administration, and to render

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, x. p. 284.

it prosperous and happy. And, if any prospect shall open of healing or terminating the differences which exist, I shall most cheerfully embrace it; though I consider myself as the deeply injured party. The recommendation of such a spirit is worthy of the moderation and wisdom which dictated it."

He then frankly acknowledged that he had had "some instrumentality" in the retaliations which of late had fallen upon certain public characters.

"I considered myself compelled to this conduct," adds he, "by reasons public as well as personal, of the most cogent nature. I *know* I have been an object of uniform opposition from Mr. Jefferson, from the moment of his coming to the city of New York to enter upon his present office. I *know*, from the most authentic sources, that I have been the frequent subject of the most unkind whispers and insinuations from the same quarter. I have long seen a formed party in the legislature under his auspices, bent upon my subversion. I cannot doubt, from the evidence I possess, that the National Gazette was instituted by him for political purposes, and that one leading object of it has been to render me and all the measures connected with my department as odious as possible." "Nevertheless," proceeds he, "I can truly say, that, excepting explanations to confidential friends, I never directly or indirectly retaliated or countenanced retaliation till very lately. . . . But when I no longer doubted that there was a formed party deliberately bent upon the subversion of measures which, in its consequences, would subvert the government; when I saw, that the undoing of the funding system in particular (which, whatever may be the original measures of that system, would prostrate the credit and honor of the nation, and bring the government into contempt with that description of men who are in every society the only firm supporters of government), was an avowed object of the party; and that all possible pains were taken to produce that effect, by rendering it odious to the body of the people, I considered it a duty to endeavor to resist the torrent, and, as an effectual means to this end, to draw aside the veil from the principal actors. To this strong impulse, to this decided conviction, I have yielded; and I think events will prove that I have judged rightly.

"Nevertheless, I pledge my hand to you, sir, that, if you shall hereafter form a plan to reunite the members of your administration upon some steady principle of co-operation. I will faithfully concur in executing it during my continuance

in office. And I will not, directly or indirectly, say or do a thing that shall endanger a feud."

Jefferson, too, in a letter of the same date, assured Washington that to no one had the dissensions of the cabinet given deeper concern than to himself — to no one equal mortification at being himself a part of them. His own grievances, which led to those dissensions, he traced back to the time when Hamilton, in the spring of 1790, procured his influence to effect a change in the vote on Assumption. "When I embarked in the government," writes he, "it was with a determination to intermeddle not at all with the legislature, and as little as possible with my co-departments. The first and only instance of variance from the former part of my resolution, I was duped into by the Secretary of the Treasury, and made a tool for forwarding his schemes, not then sufficiently understood by me; and of all the errors of my political life, this has occasioned me the deepest regret." . . . "If it has been supposed that I have ever intrigued among the members of the legislature to defeat the plans of the Secretary of the Treasury, it is contrary to all truth. . . . That I have utterly, in my private conversations, disapproved of the system of the Secretary of the Treasury, I acknowledge and avow; and this was not merely a speculative difference. His system flowed from principles adverse to liberty, and was calculated to undermine and demolish the republic by creating an influence of his department over the members of the legislature."

In regard to Freneau's Gazette, Mr. Jefferson absolutely denied that he had set it up, but admitted that, on its first establishment, and subsequently from time to time, he had furnished the editor with the Leyden Gazette, requesting that he would always translate and publish the material intelligence contained in them. "But as to any other direction or indication," adds he, "of my wish how his press should be conducted, what sort of intelligence he should give, what essays encourage, I can protest, in the presence of Heaven, that I never did, by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, say a syllable, nor attempt any kind of influence. I can further protest, in the same awful presence, that I never did, by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, write, dictate, or procure any one sentence or sentiment to be inserted in *his* or *any other* Gazette, to which my name was not affixed, or that of my office. . . .

"Freneau's proposition to publish a paper having been about the time that the writings of PUBLICOLA and the DIS-

COURSES ON DAVILA had a good deal excited the public attention, I took it for granted, from Freneau's character, which had been marked as that of a good whig, that he would give free place to pieces written against the aristocratical and monarchical principles these papers had inculcated. . . .

"As to the merits or demerits of his paper, they certainly concern me not. He and Fenno [editor of the *United States Gazette*] are rivals for the public favor; the one courts them by flattery, the other by censure; and I believe it will be admitted that the one has been as servile as the other severe. But is not the dignity and even decency of government committed, when one of its principal ministers enlists himself as an anonymous writer or paragraphist for either the one or the other of them?"

Mr. Jefferson considered himself particularly aggrieved by charges against him in Fenno's *Gazette*, which he ascribed to the pen of Mr. Hamilton, and intimated the possibility, that after his retirement from office, he might make an appeal to the country, should his own justification or the interests of the Republic require it, subscribing his name to whatever he might write, and using with freedom and truth the facts and names necessary to place the cause in its just form before that tribunal. "To a thorough disregard of the honors and emoluments of office, I join as great a value for the esteem of my countrymen; and conscious of having merited it by an integrity which cannot be reproached, and by an enthusiastic devotion to their rights and liberty, I will not suffer my retirement to be clouded by the slanders of a man, whose history, from the moment at which history can stoop to notice him, is a tissue of machinations against the liberty of the country which has not only received and given him bread, but heaped its honors on his head."

Washington's solicitude for harmony in his cabinet had been rendered more anxious by public disturbances in some parts of the country. The excise law on ardent spirits distilled within the United States, had, from the time of its enactment by Congress in 1791, met with opposition from the inhabitants of the Western counties of Pennsylvania. It had been modified and rendered less offensive within the present year; but the hostility to it had continued. Combinations were formed to defeat the execution of it, and the revenue officers were riotously opposed in the execution of their duties.

Determined to exert all the legal powers with which he was invested to check so daring and unwarrantable a spirit, Wash-

ington, on the 15th of September, issued a proclamation, warning all persons to desist from such unlawful combinations and proceedings, and requiring all courts, magistrates, and officers to bring the infractors of the law to justice; copies of which proclamation were sent to the governors of Pennsylvania and North and South Carolina.

On the 18th of October, Washington made one more effort to allay the discord in his cabinet. Finding it impossible for the rival secretaries to concur in any system of politics, he urged them to accommodate their differences by mutual yieldings. "A measure of this sort," observed he, "would produce harmony and consequent good in our public councils, and the contrary will inevitably produce confusion and serious mischiefs; and all for what? Because mankind cannot think alike, but would adopt different means to attain the same end. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both to be pure and well meant, and that experience only will decide with respect to the salutariness of the measures which are the subjects of this dispute.

"Why, then, when some of the best citizens of the United States—men of discernment—uniform and tried patriots—who have no sinister views to promote, but are chaste in their ways of thinking and acting, are to be found, some on one side and some on the other of the questions which have caused these agitations—why should either of you be so tenacious of your opinions as to make no allowance for those of the other? . . .

"I have a great, a sincere esteem and regard for you both; and ardently wish that some line could be marked out by which both of you could walk."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

WASHINGTON UNANIMOUSLY RE-ELECTED—OPENING OF SESSION OF CONGRESS—TOPICS OF THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH—ABORTIVE ATTACK UPON THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY—WASHINGTON INSTALLED FOR HIS SECOND TERM.

It was after a long and painful conflict of feelings that Washington consented to be a candidate for a re-election. There was no opposition on the part of the public, and the vote for him in the Electoral College was unanimous. In a letter

to a friend, he declared himself gratefully impressed by so distinguished and honorable a testimony of public approbation and confidence. In truth he had been apprehensive of being elected by but a meagre majority, which he acknowledged would have been a matter of chagrin.

George Clinton, of New York, was held up for the Vice-presidency, in opposition to John Adams; but the latter was re-elected by a majority of twenty-seven electoral votes.

But though gratified to find that the hearts of his countrymen were still with him, it was with no emotion of pleasure that Washington looked forward to another term of public duty, and a prolonged absence from the quiet retirement of Mount Vernon.

The session of Congress, which was to close his present term, opened on the 5th of November. The continuance of the Indian war formed a painful topic in the President's address. Efforts at pacification had as yet been unsuccessful: two brave officers, Colonel Hardin and Major Trueman, who had been sent to negotiate with the savages, had been severally murdered. Vigorous preparations were therefore making for an active prosecution of hostilities, in which Wayne was to take the field. Washington, with benevolent earnestness, dwelt upon the humane system of civilizing the tribes, by inculcating agricultural tastes and habits.

The factious and turbulent opposition which had been made in some parts of the country to the collection of duties on spirituous liquors distilled in the United States, was likewise adverted to by the President, and a determination expressed to assert and maintain the just authority of the laws; trusting in the "full co operation of the other departments of government, and the zealous support of all good citizens."

In a part of the speech addressed to the House of Representatives, he expressed a strong hope that the state of the national finances was now sufficiently matured to admit of an arrangement for the redemption and discharge of the public debt. "No measure," said he, "can be more desirable, whether viewed with an eye to its intrinsic importance, or to the general sentiment and wish of the nation."

The address was well received by both houses, and a disposition expressed to concur with the President's views and wishes. The discussion of the subjects to which he had called their attention, soon produced vehement conflicts of opinion in the house, marking the growing virulence of parties. The Secretary of the Treasury, in reporting, at the request of

the House, a plan for the annual reduction of so much of the national debt as the United States had a right to redeem, spoke of the expenses of the Indian war, and the necessity of additional internal taxes. The consideration of the report was parried or evaded, and a motion made to reduce the military establishment. This gave an opportunity for sternly criticising the mode in which the Indian war had been conducted; for discussing the comparative merits and cost of regular and militia forces, and for inveighing against standing armies, as dangerous to liberty. These discussions, while they elicited much heat, led to no present result, and gave way to an inquiry into the conduct of the Secretary of the Treasury in regard to certain loans, which the President, in conformity to acts of Congress, had authorized him to make; but concerning the management of which he had not furnished detailed reports to the legislature.

The subject was opened by Mr. Giles, of Virginia, who moved in the House of Representatives a series of resolutions seeking information in the matter, and who followed his resolutions by a speech; charging the Secretary of the Treasury with official misconduct, and intimating that a large balance of public money had not been accounted for.

A report of the Secretary gave all the information desired; but the charges against him continued to be urged with great acrimony to the close of the session, when they were signally rejected, not more than sixteen members voting for any one of them.

The veneration inspired by the character of Washington, and the persuasion that he would never permit himself to be considered the head of a party, had hitherto shielded him from attack; a little circumstance, however, showed that the rancor of party was beginning to glance at him.

On his birthday (February 22) many of the members of Congress were desirous of waiting on him in testimony of respect as chief magistrate of the Union, and a motion was made to adjourn for half an hour for the purpose. It met with serious opposition as a species of homage — it was setting up an idol dangerous to liberty — it had a bias towards monarchy!

Washington, though he never courted popularity, was attentive to the signs of public opinion, and disposed to be guided by them when right. The time for entering upon his second term of Presidency was at hand. There had been much cavilling at the parade attending his first installation. Jefferson especially had pronounced it "not at all in character

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with the simplicity of the republican government, and looking, as if wishfully, to those of European Courts."

To guide him on the coming occasion, Washington called the heads of departments together, and desired they would consult with one another, and agree on any changes they might consider for the better, assuring them he would willingly conform to whatever they should advise.

They held such consultation, and ultimately gave their individual opinions in writing, with regard to the time, manner, and place of the President's taking the oath of office. As they were divided in opinion, and gave no positive advice as to any change, no change was made. On the 4th of March, the oath was publicly administered to Washington by Mr. Justice Cushing, in the Senate chamber, in presence of the heads of departments, foreign ministers, such members of the House of Representatives as were in town, and as many other spectators as could be accommodated.

## CHAPTER XXX.

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS MINISTER AT THE FRENCH COURT — HIS REPRESENTATIONS OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS — WASHINGTON'S CONCERN FOR LAFAYETTE — JEFFERSON ANNOYED AT HIS FOREBODINGS — OVERTHROW OF THE FRENCH MONARCHY — IMPRISONMENT OF LAFAYETTE — JEFFERSON CONCERNED, BUT NOT DISCOURAGED AT THE REPUBLICAN MASSACRES — WASHINGTON SHOCKED — HIS LETTER TO THE MARCHIONESS LAFAYETTE.

EARLY in 1792, Gouverneur Morris had received the appointment of minister plenipotentiary to the French court. His diplomatic correspondence from Paris gave shocking accounts of the excesses attending the revolution. France, he represented as governed by Jacobin clubs. Lafayette, by endeavoring to check their excesses, had completely lost his authority. "Were he to appear just now in Paris, unattended by his army," writes Morris, "he would be torn to pieces." Washington received these accounts with deep concern. What was to be the fate of that distracted country — what was to be the fate of his friend!

Jefferson was impatient of these gloomy picturings; especially when he saw their effect upon Washington's mind. "The fact is," writes he, "that Gouverneur Morris, a high-flying



monarchy man, shutting his eyes and his faith to every fact against his wishes, and believing every thing he desires to be true, has kept the President's mind constantly poisoned with his forebodings."

His forebodings, however, were soon verified. Lafayette addressed from his camp a letter to the Legislative Assembly, formally denouncing the conduct of the Jacobin Club, as violating the declaration of rights and the constitution.

His letter was of no avail. On the 20th of June bands from the Faubourg St. Antoine, armed with pikes, and headed by Santerre, marched to the Tuileries, insulted the king in the presence of his family, obliging him to put on the *bonnet rouge*, the baleful cap of liberty of the revolution. Lafayette, still loyal to his sovereign, hastened to Paris, appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and demanded, in the name of the army, the punishment of those who had thus violated the constitution, by insulting in his palace, the chief of the executive power. His intervention proved of no avail, and he returned with a sad and foreboding heart to his army.

On the 9th of August, Paris was startled by the sound of the fatal tocsin at midnight. On the 10th the chateau of the Tuileries was attacked, and the Swiss guard who defended it were massacred. The king and queen took refuge in the National Assembly, which body decreed the suspension of the king's authority.

It was at once the overthrow of the monarchy, the annihilation of the constitutional party, and the commencement of the reign of terror. Lafayette, who was the head of the constitutionalists, was involved in their downfall. The Jacobins denounced him in the National Assembly; his arrest was decreed, and emissaries were sent to carry the decree into effect. At first he thought of repairing at once to Paris and facing his accusers, but, on second thoughts, determined to bend before the storm and await the return of more propitious days.

Leaving every thing in order in his army, which remained encamped at Sedan, he set off with a few trusty friends for the Netherlands, to seek an asylum in Holland or the United States, but, with his companions, was detained a prisoner at Rochefort, the first Austrian post.

"Thus his circle is completed," writes Morris. "He has spent his fortune on a revolution, and is now crushed by the wheel which he put in motion. He lasted longer than I expected."

Washington looked with a sadder eye on this catastrophe of Lafayette's high-hearted and gallant aspirations, and mourned over the adverse fortunes of his friend.

The reign of terror continued. "We have had one week of unchecked murders, in which some thousands have perished in this city," writes Morris to Jefferson, on the 10th of September. "It began with between two and three hundred of the clergy, who had been shot because they would not take the oaths prescribed by the law, and which they said were contrary to their conscience." Thence *these executors of speedy justice* went on the *abbaye* where persons were confined who were at court on the 10th of August. These were despatched also, and afterwards they visited the other prisons. "All those who were confined either on the accusation or suspicion of crimes, were destroyed."

The accounts of these massacres grieved Mr. Jefferson. They were shocking in themselves, and he feared they might bring great discredit upon the Jacobins of France, whom he considered republican patriots, bent on the establishment of a free constitution. They had acquiesced for a time, said he, in the experiment of retaining an hereditary executive, but finding, if pursued, it would insure the re-establishment of a despotism, they considered it absolutely indispensable to expunge that office. "In the struggle which was necessary, many guilty persons fell without the forms of trial, and with them, some innocent. These I deplore as much as anybody, and shall deplore some of them to the day of my death. But I deplore them as I should have done, had they fallen in battle. It was necessary to use the arm of the people, a machine not quite so blind as balls and bombs, but blind to a certain degree. A few of their cordial friends met at their hands the fate of enemies. But time and truth will rescue and embalm their memories, while their posterity will be enjoying that very liberty for which they would never have hesitated to offer up their lives. The liberty of the whole earth was depending on the issue of the contest, and was ever such a prize won with so little innocent blood? My own affections have been deeply wounded by some of the martyrs to this cause, but rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated; were there but an Adam and Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than as it is now."<sup>1</sup>

Washington, who contemplated the French revolution with a

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mr. Short. *Jefferson's Works*, iii. 501.

less sanguine eye than Jefferson, was simply shocked at the atrocities which disgraced it, and at the dangers to be apprehended from an unrestrained populace. A letter which he received from Gouverneur Morris (dated October 23), placed the condition of the unfortunate Louis XVI., the ancient friend and ally of America, in a light to awaken his benevolent sympathy. "You will have seen," writes Morris, "that the king is accused of high crimes and misdemeanors; but I verily believe that he wished sincerely for this nation, the enjoyment of the utmost degree of liberty, which their situation and circumstances will permit. He wished for a good constitution, but, unfortunately, he had not the means to obtain it, or, if he had, he was thwarted by those about him. What may be his fate God only knows, but history informs us that the passage of dethroned monarchs is short from the prison to the grave."

Nothing, however, in all the eventful tidings from France, gave Washington greater concern than the catastrophe of his friend Lafayette. His first thoughts prompted the consolation and assistance of the marchioness. In a letter to her, he writes: "If I had words that could convey to you an adequate idea of my feelings on the present situation of the Marquis Lafayette, this letter would appear to you in a different garb. The sole object in writing to you now, is to inform you that I have deposited in the hands of Mr. Nicholas Van Staphorst of Amsterdam, two thousand three hundred and ten guilders, Holland currency, equal to two hundred guineas, subject to your orders.

"This sum is, I am certain, the least I am indebted for services rendered me by the Marquis de Lafayette, of which I never yet have received the account. I could add much, but it is best, perhaps, that I should say little on this subject. Your goodness will supply my deficiency.

"The uncertainty of your situation, after all the inquiries I have made, has occasioned a delay in this address and remittance; and even now the measure adopted is more the effect of a desire to find where you are, than from any knowledge I have obtained of your residence."

Madame de Lafayette, in fact, was at that time a prisoner in France, in painful ignorance of her husband's fate. She had been commanded by the Jacobin committee to repair to Paris about the time of the massacres, but was subsequently permitted to reside at Chavaniac, under the surveillance of the municipality.

We will anticipate events by adding here, that some time afterwards, finding her husband was a prisoner in Austria, she

obtained permission to leave France, and ultimately, with her two daughters, joined him in his prison at Olmutz. George Washington Lafayette, the son of the general, determined to seek an asylum in America.

In the mean time, the arms of revolutionary France were crowned with great success. "Towns fall before them without a blow," writes Gouverneur Morris, "and the declaration of rights produces an effect equal at least to the trumpets of Joshua." But Morris was far from drawing a favorable augury from this success. "We must observe the civil, moral, religious, and political institutions," said he. "These have a steady and lasting effect, and these only. . . . Since I have been in this country, I have seen the worship of many idols, and but little of the true God. I have seen many of those idols broken, and some of them beaten to dust. I have seen the late constitution, in one short year, admired as a stupendous monument of human wisdom, and ridiculed as an egregious production of folly and vice. I wish much, very much, the happiness of this inconstant people. I love them. I feel grateful for their efforts in our cause, and I consider the establishment of a good constitution here as the principal means, under Divine Providence, of extending the blessings of freedom to the many millions of my fellow-men, who groan in bondage on the continent of Europe. But I do not greatly indulge the flattering illusions of hope, because I do not perceive that reformation of morals, without which, liberty is but an empty sound."<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXXI.

WASHINGTON'S ENTRANCE UPON HIS SECOND TERM — GLOOMY AUSPICES — EXECUTION OF LOUIS XVI. — FRANCE DECLARES WAR AGAINST ENGLAND — BELLIGERENT EXCITEMENT IN AMERICA — PROCLAMATION OF NEUTRALITY — FRENCH MISSION TO THE UNITED STATES — GENET ARRIVES IN CHARLESTON — HIS RECEPTION IN PHILADELPHIA — VIEWS OF JEFFERSON AND HAMILTON — WASHINGTON'S DISPASSIONATE OPINION.

It was under gloomy auspices, a divided cabinet, an increasing exasperation of parties, a suspicion of monarchical tendencies, and a threatened abatement of popularity, that Washington

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Morris*, ii. 248.

entered upon his second term of presidency. It was a portentous period in the history of the world, for in a little while came news of that tragical event, the beheading of Louis XVI. It was an event deplored by many of the truest advocates of liberty in America, who, like Washington, remembered that unfortunate monarch as the friend of their country in her revolutionary struggle; but others, zealous in the cause of political reform, considered it with complacency, as sealing the downfall of the French monarchy and the establishment of a republic.

An event followed hard upon it to shake the quiet of the world. Early in April intelligence was received that France had declared war against England. Popular excitement was now wound up to the highest pitch. What, it was asked, were Americans to do in such a juncture? Could they remain unconcerned spectators of a conflict between their ancient enemy and republican France? Should they fold their arms and look coldly on a war, begun, it is true, by France, but threatening the subversion of the republic, and re-establishment of a monarchical government?

Many, in the wild enthusiasm of the moment, would at once have precipitated the country into a war. Fortunately this belligerent impulse was not general, and was checked by the calm, controlling wisdom of Washington. He was at Mount Vernon when he received news of the war, and understood that American vessels were already designated, and some even fitting out to serve in it as privateers. He forthwith despatched a letter to Jefferson on the subject. "War having actually commenced between France and Great Britain," writes he, "it behooves the government of this country to use every means in its power to prevent the citizens thereof from embroiling us with either of those powers, by endeavoring to maintain a strict neutrality."

Hastening back to Philadelphia, he held a cabinet council on the 19th of April, to deliberate on the measures proper to be observed by the United States in the present crisis; and to determine upon a general plan of conduct for the Executive.

In this counsel it was unanimously determined that a proclamation should be issued by the President, "forbidding the citizens of the United States to take part in any hostilities on the seas, and warning them against carrying to the belligerents any articles deemed contraband according to the modern usages of nations, and forbidding all acts and proceedings inconsistent with the duties of a friendly nation towards those at war."

It was unanimously agreed also, that should the republic of France send a minister to the United States, he should be received.

No one at the present day questions the wisdom of Washington's proclamation of neutrality. It was our true policy to keep aloof from European war, in which our power would be insufficient, our loss certain. The measure, however, was at variance with the enthusiastic feelings and excited passions of a large proportion of the citizens. They treated it for a time with some forbearance, out of long-cherished reverence for Washington's name; but his popularity, hitherto unlimited, was no proof against the inflamed state of public feeling. The proclamation was stigmatized as a royal edict; a daring assumption of power; an open manifestation of partiality for England and hostility to France.

Washington saw that a deadly blow was aimed at his influence and his administration, and that both were at hazard; but he was convinced that neutrality was the true national policy, and he resolved to maintain it, whatever might be his immediate loss of popular favor. His resolution was soon put to the test.

The French republic had recently appointed Edmond Charles Genet, or "Citizen Genet," as he was styled, minister to the United States. He was represented as a young man of good parts, very well educated, and of an ardent temper. He had served in the bureau of Foreign Affairs under the ministry of Vergennes, and been employed in various diplomatic situations until the overthrow of the monarchy, when he joined the popular party, became a political zealot, and member of the Jacobin Club, and was rewarded with the mission to America.

A letter from Gouverneur Morris apprised Mr. Jefferson that the Executive Council had furnished Genet with three hundred blank commissions for privateers, to be given clandestinely to such persons as he might find in America inclined to take them. "They suppose," writes Morris, "that the avidity of some adventurers may lead them into measures which would involve altercations with Great Britain, and terminate finally in a war."

Genet's conduct proved the correctness of this information. He had landed at Charleston, South Carolina, from the French frigate the *Ambuscade*, on the 8th of April, a short time before the proclamation of neutrality, and was received with great rejoicing and extravagant demonstrations of respect. His landing at a port several hundred miles from the seat of government, was a singular move for a diplomat; but his object in so

doing was soon evident. It is usual for a foreign minister to present his credentials to the government to which he comes, and be received by it in form before he presumes to enter upon the exercise of his functions. Citizen Genet, however, did not stop for these formalities. Confident in his nature, heated in his zeal, and flushed with the popular warmth of his reception, he could not pause to consider the proprieties of his mission and the delicate responsibilities involved in diplomacy. The contiguity of Charleston to the West Indies made it a favorable port for fitting out privateers against the trade of these islands: and during Genet's short sojourn there he issued commissions for arming and equipping vessels of war for that purpose, and manning them with Americans.

In the latter part of April, Genet set out for the north by land. As he proceeded on his journey, the newspapers teemed with accounts of the processions and addresses with which he was greeted, and the festivities which celebrated his arrival at each place. Jefferson, in a letter to Madison written from Philadelphia on the 5th of May, observes with exultation: "The war between France and England seems to be producing an effect not contemplated. All the old spirit of 1776, rekindling the newspapers from Boston to Charleston, proves this; and even the monocrat papers are obliged to publish the most furious philippics against England. A French frigate<sup>1</sup> took a British prize [the *Grange*] off the Capes of Delaware the other day, and sent her up here. Upon her coming into sight, thousands and thousands of the *yeomanry* of the city crowded and covered the wharves. Never was there such a crowd seen there; and when the British colors were seen reversed, and the French flying above them, they burst into peals of exultation. I wish we may be able to repress the spirit of the people within the limits of a fair neutrality. . . . We expect Genet daily."

A friend of Hamilton writes in a different vein. Speaking of Genet, he observes: "He has a good person, a fine ruddy complexion, quite active, and seems always in a bustle, more like a busy man than a man of business. A Frenchman in his manners, he announces himself in all companies as the minister of the republic, etc., talks freely of his commission, and, like most Europeans, seem to have adopted mistaken notions of the penetration and knowledge of the people of the United States. His system, I think, is to laugh us into the war if he can."

On the 16th of May, Genet arrived at Philadelphia. His

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<sup>1</sup> The *Ambuscade*.

belligerent operations at Charleston had already been made a subject of complaint to the government by Mr. Hammond, the British minister; but they produced no abatement in the public enthusiasm. "It was suspected," writes Jefferson, "that there was not a clear mind in the President's counsellors to receive Genet. The citizens, however, determined to receive him. Arrangements were taken for meeting him at Gray's Ferry, in a great body. He escaped that, by arriving in town with the letters which brought information that he was on the road."<sup>1</sup>

On the following day, various societies and a large body of citizens waited upon him with addresses, recalling with gratitude the aid given by France in the achievement of American independence, and extolling and rejoicing in the success of the arms of the French republic. On the same day, before Genet had presented his credentials and been acknowledged by the President, he was invited to a grand republican dinner, "at which," we are told, "the company united in singing the Marseillaise Hymn. A deputation of French sailors presented themselves, and were received by the guests with the 'fraternal embrace.' The table was decorated with the 'tree of liberty,' and a red cap, called the cap of liberty, was placed on the head of the minister, and from his travelled in succession from head to head round the table."<sup>2</sup>

This enthusiasm of the multitude was regarded with indulgence, if not favor, by Jefferson, as being the effervescence of the true spirit of liberty; but was deprecated by Hamilton as an infatuation that might "do us much harm, and could do France no good." A letter, written by him at the time, is worthy of full citation, as embodying the sentiments of that party of which he was the leader. "It cannot be without danger and inconvenience to our interests, to impress on the nations of Europe an idea that we are actuated by the same spirit which has for some time past fatally misguided the measures of those who conduct the affairs of France, and sullied a cause once glorious, and that might have been triumphant. The cause of France is compared with that of America during its late revolution. Would to Heaven that the comparison were just! Would to Heaven we could discern, in the mirror of French affairs, the same decorum, the same gravity, the same order, the same dignity, the same solemnity, which distinguished the cause of the American Revolution! Clouds and darkness would not then rest upon the issue as they now do. I

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Madison, Works, III. 562.

<sup>2</sup> Jay's Life, vol. I. p. 301.



own I do not like the comparison. When I contemplate the horrid and systematic massacre of the 2d and 3d of September; when I observe that a Marat and a Robespierre, the notorious prompters of those bloody scenes, sit triumphantly in the convention, and take a conspicuous part in its measures — that an attempt to bring the assassins to justice has been obliged to be abandoned — when I see an unfortunate prince, whose reign was a continued demonstration of the goodness and benevolence of his heart, of his attachment to the people of whom he was the monarch, who, though educated in the lap of despotism, had given repeated proofs that he was not the enemy of liberty, brought precipitately and ignominiously to the block without any substantial proof of guilt, as yet disclosed — without even an authentic exhibition of motives, in decent regard to the opinions of mankind; when I find the doctrines of atheism openly advanced in the convention, and heard with loud applauses; when I see the sword of fanaticism extended to force a political creed upon citizens who were invited to submit to the arms of France as the harbingers of liberty; when I behold the hand of rapacity outstretched to prostrate and ravish the monuments of religious worship, erected by those citizens and their ancestors; when I perceive passion, tumult and violence usurping those seats, where reason and cool deliberation ought to preside, I acknowledge that I am glad to believe there is no real resemblance between what was the cause of America and what is the cause of France; that the difference is no less great than that between liberty and licentiousness. I regret whatever has a tendency to confound them, and I feel anxious, as an American, that the ebullitions of inconsiderate men among us may not tend to involve our reputation in the issue.”<sup>1</sup>

Washington, from his elevated and responsible situation, endeavored to look beyond the popular excitement, and regard the affairs of France with a dispassionate and impartial eye, but he confessed that he saw in the turn they had lately taken the probability of a terrible confusion, to which he could predict no certain issue: a boundless ocean whence no land was to be seen. He feared less, he said, for the cause of liberty in France from the pressure of foreign enemies, than from the strifes and quarrels of those in whose hands the government was intrusted, who were ready to tear each other to pieces, and would more probably prove the worst foes the country had.

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's Works, v. 566.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

GENET PRESENTS HIS LETTER OF CREDENCE — HIS DIPLOMATIC SPEECH — WASHINGTON'S CONVERSATION WITH JEFFERSON — CAPTURE OF THE SHIP GRANGE AND OTHER BRITISH VESSELS — QUESTION OF RESTITUTION — DISSATISFACTION OF GENET — DEMANDS RELEASE OF TWO AMERICAN CITIZENS — WASHINGTON'S SENSITIVENESS TO THE ATTACKS OF THE PRESS — HIS UNSHAKEN DETERMINATION.

On the 18th of May, Genet presented his letter of credence to the President; by whom, notwithstanding his late unwarrantable proceedings at Charleston, he was well received; Washington taking the occasion to express his sincere regard for the French nation.

Jefferson, who, as Secretary of State, was present, had all his warm sympathies in favor of France, roused by Genet's diplomatic speech. "It was impossible," writes he to Madison, "for any thing to be more affectionate, more magnanimous, than the purport of Genet's mission. 'We wish you to do nothing,' said he, 'but what is for your own good, and we will do all in our power to promote it. Cherish your own peace and prosperity. You have expressed a willingness to enter into a more liberal commerce with us; I bring full powers to form such a treaty, and a preliminary decree of the National Convention to lay open our country and its colonies to you, for every purpose of utility, without your participating the burdens of maintaining and defending them. We see in you, the only person on earth who can love us sincerely, and merit to be so loved.' In short, he offers every thing and asks nothing."

"Yet I know the offers will be opposed," adds Jefferson, "and suspect they will not be accepted. In short, my dear sir, it is impossible for you to conceive what is passing in our conclave; and it is evident that one or two, at least, under pretence of avoiding war on the one side, have no great antipathy to run foul of it on the other, and to make a part in the confederacy of princes against human liberty."

The "one or two," in the paragraph above cited, no doubt, imply Hamilton and Knox.

Washington again, in conversation, endeavored to counteract these suspicions which were swaying Jefferson's mind against his contemporaries. We give Jefferson's own account of the

conversation. "He (Washington) observed that, if anybody wanted to change the form of our government into a monarchy, he was sure it was only a few individuals, and that no man in the United States would set his face against it, more than himself; but, that this was not what he was afraid of; his fears were from another quarter; that *there was more danger of anarchy being introduced.*"

He then adverted to Freneau's paper and its partisan hostilities. He despaired, he said, all personal attacks upon himself, but observed that there never had been an act of the government which that paper had not abused. "He was evidently sore and warm," adds Jefferson, "and I took his intention to be, that I should interpose in some way with Freneau; perhaps, withdraw his appointment of translating clerk in my office. But I will not do it."

It appears to us rather an ungracious determination on the part of Jefferson, to keep this barking cur in his employ, when he found him so annoying to the chief, whom he professed, and we believe with sincerity, to revere. Neither are his reasons for so doing satisfactory, savoring, as they do, of those strong political suspicions already noticed. "His (Freneau's) paper," observed he, "has saved our Constitution, which was galloping fast into monarchy, and has been checked by no means so powerfully as by that paper. It is well and universally known, that it has been that paper which checked the career of the monocrats; the President, not sensible of the designs of the party, has not, with his usual good sense and *sang froid*, looked on the efforts and effects of this free press, and seen that, though some bad things have passed through it to the public, yet the good have preponderated immensely."<sup>1</sup>

Jefferson was mistaken. Washington had regarded the efforts and effects of this free press with his usual good sense; and the injurious influence it exercised in public affairs was presently manifested in the transactions of the government with Genet. The acts of this diplomatic personage at Charleston, had not been the sole ground of the complaint preferred by the British minister. The capture of the British vessel, the *Grange*, by the frigate *Ambuscade*, formed a graver one. Occurring within our waters, it was a clear usurpation of national sovereignty, and a violation of neutral rights. The British minister demanded a restitution of the prize, and the cabinet were unanimously of opinion that restitution should be made; nor

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<sup>1</sup> Works, ix. 143.

was there any difficulty with the French minister on that head ; but restitution was likewise claimed of other vessels captured on the high seas, and brought into port by the privateers authorized by Genet. In regard to these there was a difference of sentiment in the cabinet. Hamilton and Knox were of opinion that the government should interpose to restore the prizes ; it being the duty of a neutral nation to remedy any injury sustained by armaments fitted out in its ports. Jefferson and Randolph contended that the case should be left to the decision of the courts of justice. If the courts adjudged the commissions issued by Genet to be invalid, they would, of course, decide the captures made under them to be void, and the property to remain in the original owners ; if, on the other hand, the legal right to the property had been transferred to the captors, they would so decide.

Seeing this difference of opinion in the cabinet, Washington reserved the point for further deliberation ; but directed the Secretary of State to communicate to the ministers of France and Britain the principles in which they concurred ; these being considered as settled. Circular letters, also, were addressed to the governors of several States, requiring their co-operation, with force, if necessary, to carry out the rules agreed upon.

Genet took umbrage at these decisions of the government, and expressed his dissatisfaction in a letter, complaining of them as violations of natural right, and subversive of the existing treaties between the two nations. His letters, though somewhat wanting in strict decorum of language, induced a review of the subject in the cabinet ; and he was informed that no reason appeared for changing the system adopted. He was further informed that in the opinion of the executive, the vessels which had been illegally equipped, should depart from the ports of the United States.

Genet was not disposed to acquiesce in these decisions. He was aware of the grateful feelings of the nation to France ; of the popular disposition to go all lengths, short of war, in her favor ; of the popular idea, that republican interests were identical on both sides of the Atlantic ; that a royal triumph over republicanism in Europe, would be followed by a combination to destroy it in this country. He had heard the clamor among the populace, and uttered in Freneau's Gazette and other newspapers, against the policy of neutrality ; the people, he thought, were with him, if Washington was not, and he believed the latter would not dare to risk his popularity in thwarting their enthusiasm. He persisted, therefore, in disregarding the decis-

ions of the government, and spoke of them as a departure from the obligations it owed to France; a cowardly abandonment of friends when danger menaced.

Another event added to the irritation of Genet. Two American citizens, whom he had engaged at Charleston to cruise in the service of France, were arrested on board of the privateer, conducted to prison, and prosecutions commenced against them. The indignant feelings of Genet were vented in an extraordinary letter to the Secretary of State. When speaking of their arrest, "The crime laid to their charge," writes he—"the crime which my mind cannot conceive, and which my pen almost refuses to state—is the serving of France, and defending with her children the common glorious cause of liberty.

"Being ignorant of any positive law or treaty, which deprives Americans of this privilege, and authorizes officers of police arbitrarily to take mariners in the service of France from on board of their vessels, I call upon your intervention, sir, and that of the President of the United States, in order to obtain the immediate releasement of the above-mentioned officers, who have acquired by the sentiments animating them, and by the act of their engagement, anterior to any act to the contrary, the right of French citizens, if they have lost that of American citizens."

The lofty and indignant tone of this letter had no effect in shaking the determination of government, or obtaining the release of the prisoners. Washington confesses, however, that he was very much harried and perplexed by the "disputes, memorials, and what not," with which he was pestered, by one or other of the powers at war. It was a sore trial of his equanimity, his impartiality, and his discrimination, and wore upon his spirits and his health. "The President is not well," writes Jefferson to Madison (June 9); "little lingering fevers have been hanging about him for a week or ten days, and affected his looks most remarkably. He is also extremely affected by the attacks made and kept up on him, in the public papers. I think he feels these things more than any other person I ever yet met with. I am sincerely sorry to see them."

Jefferson's sorrow was hardly in accordance with the resolution expressed by him, to retain Freneau in his office, notwithstanding his incessant attacks upon the President and the measures of his government. Washington might well feel sensitive to these attacks, which Jefferson acknowledges were the more mischievous, from being planted on popular ground,

on the universal love of the people to France and its cause. But he was not to be deterred by personal considerations from the strict line of his duty. He was aware that, in withstanding the public infatuation in regard to France, he was putting an unparalleled popularity at hazard; but he put it at hazard without hesitation; and, in so doing, set a magnanimous example for his successors in office to endeavor to follow.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

WASHINGTON CALLED TO MOUNT VERNON — THE CASE OF THE LITTLE SARAH COMES UP IN HIS ABSENCE — GOVERNOR MIFFLIN DETERMINED TO PREVENT HER DEPARTURE — RAGE OF GENET — JEFFERSON URGES DETENTION OF THE PRIVATEER UNTIL THE PRESIDENT'S RETURN — EVASIVE ASSURANCE OF GENET — DISTRUST OF HAMILTON AND KNOX — WASHINGTON RETURNS TO PHILADELPHIA — A CABINET COUNCIL — ITS DETERMINATION COMMUNICATED TO GENET — THE VESSEL SAILS IN DEFIANCE OF IT — FORMATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY — THE RECALL OF GENET DETERMINED ON — THE RIBALD LAMPOON — WASHINGTON'S OUTBURST.

IN the latter part of July, Washington was suddenly called to Mount Vernon by the death of Mr. Whiting, the manager of his estates. During his brief absence from the seat of government, occurred the case of the LITTLE SARAH. This was a British merchant vessel which had been captured by a French privateer, and brought into Philadelphia, where she had been armed and equipped for privateering; manned with one hundred and twenty men, many of them Americans, and the name changed into that of *Le Petit Democrat*. This, of course, was in violation of Washington's decision, which had been communicated to Genet.

General Mifflin, now Governor of Pennsylvania, being informed, on the 6th of July, that the vessel was to sail the next day, sent his secretary, Mr. Dallas, at midnight to Genet, to persuade him to detain her until the President should arrive, intimating that otherwise force would be used to prevent her departure.

Genet flew into one of the transports of passion to which he was prone; contrasted the treatment experienced by him from the officers of government, with the attachment to his nation

professed by the people at large; declared that the President was not the sovereign of the country, and had no right, without consulting Congress, to give such instructions as he had issued to the State Governors; threatened to appeal from his decision to the people, and to repel force by force, should an attempt be made to seize the privateer.

Apprised of this menace, Governor Mifflin forthwith ordered out one hundred and twenty of the militia to take possession of the privateer, and communicated the circumstances of the case to the cabinet.

Mr. Jefferson now took the matter in hand, and on the 7th of July, in an interview with Genet, repeated the request that the privateer be detained until the arrival of the President. Genet, he writes, instantly took up the subject in a very high tone, and went into an immense field of declamation and complaint. Jefferson made a few efforts to be heard, but, finding them ineffectual, suffered the torrent of vituperation to pour on. He sat in silence, therefore, while Genet charged the government with having violated the treaties between the two nations; with having suffered its flag to be insulted and disregarded by the English; who stopped its vessels on the high seas, and took out of them whatever they suspected to be French property. He declared that he had been thwarted and opposed in every thing he had to do with the government; so that he sometimes thought of packing up and going away, as he found he could not be useful to his nation in any thing. He censured the executive for the measures it had taken without consulting Congress, and declared, that, on the President's return, he would certainly press him to convene that body.

He had by this time exhausted his passion and moderated his tone, and Jefferson took occasion to say a word. "I stopped him," writes he, "at the subject of calling Congress; explained our Constitution to him as having divided the functions of government among three different authorities, the executive, legislative, and judiciary, each of which were supreme on all questions belonging to their department, and independent of the others; that all the questions which had arisen between him and us, belonged to the executive department, and, if Congress were sitting, could not be carried to them, nor would they take notice of them."

Genet asked with surprise, if Congress were not the sovereign.

"No," replied Jefferson. "They are sovereign only in making laws; the executive is the sovereign in executing them,

and the judiciary in construing them, where they relate to that department."

"But at least," cried Genet, "Congress are bound to see that the treaties are observed." "No," rejoined Jefferson, "There are very few cases, indeed, arising out of treaties, which they can take notice of. The President is to see that treaties are observed."

"If he decides against the treaty," demanded Genet, "to whom is a nation to appeal?" "The Constitution," replied Jefferson, "has made the President the last appeal."

Genet, perfectly taken aback at finding his own ignorance in the matter, shrugged his shoulders, made a bow, and said, "he would not compliment Mr. Jefferson on such a Constitution!"

He had now subsided into coolness and good humor, and the subject of the *Little Sarah* being resumed, Jefferson pressed her detention until the President's return; intimating that her previous departure would be considered a very serious offence.

Genet made no promise, but expressed himself very happy to be able to inform Mr. Jefferson that the vessel was not in a state of readiness; she had to change her position that day, he said, and fall down the river, somewhere about the lower end of the town, for the convenience of taking some things on board, and would not depart yet.

When Jefferson endeavored to extort an assurance that she would await the President's return, he evaded a direct commitment, intimating, however, by look and gesture, that she would not be gone before that time. "But let me beseech you," said he, "not to permit any attempt to put men on board of her. She is filled with high-spirited patriots, and they will unquestionably resist. And there is no occasion, for I tell you she will not be ready to depart for some time."

Jefferson was accordingly impressed with the belief that the privateer would remain in the river until the President should decide on her case, and, on communicating this conviction to the governor, the latter ordered the militia to be dismissed.

Hamilton and Knox, on the other hand, were distrustful, and proposed immediate erection of a battery on Mud Island, with guns mounted to fire at the vessel, and even to sink her, if she attempted to pass. Jefferson, however, refusing to concur in the measure, it was not adopted. The vessel, at that time, was at Gloucester Point, but soon fell down to Chester.

Washington arrived at Philadelphia on the 11th of July; when papers requiring "instant attention" were put into his hands. They related to the case of the *Little Sarah*, and were



from Jefferson, who, being ill with fever, had retired to his seat in the country. Nothing could exceed the displeasure of Washington when he examined these papers.

In a letter written to Jefferson, on the spur of the moment, he puts these indignant queries: "What is to be done in the case of the *Little Sarah*, now at Chester? Is the minister of the French republic to set the acts of this government at defiance *with impunity*? And then threaten the executive with an appeal to the people! What must the world think of such conduct, and of the government of the United States in submitting to it?

"These are serious questions. Circumstances press for decision, and, as you have had time to consider them (upon me they come unexpectedly), I wish to know your opinion upon them, even before to-morrow, for the vessel may then be gone."

Mr. Jefferson, in a reply of the same date, informed the President of his having received assurance, that day, from Mr. Genet, that the vessel would not be gone before his (the President's) decision.

In consequence of this assurance of the French minister, no immediate measures of a coercive nature were taken with regard to the vessel; but, in a cabinet council held the next day, it was determined to detain in port all privateers which had been equipped within the United States by any of the belligerent powers.

No time was lost in communicating this determination to Genet; but, in defiance of it, the vessel sailed on her cruise.

It must have been a severe trial of Washington's spirit to see his authority thus braved and insulted, and to find that the people, notwithstanding the indignity thus offered to their chief magistrate, sided with the aggressors, and exulted in their open defiance of his neutral policy.

About this time a society was formed under the auspices of the French minister, and in imitation of the Jacobin clubs of Paris. It was called the Democratic Society, and soon gave rise to others throughout the Union; all taking the French side in the present questions. The term democrat, thenceforward, began to designate an ultra-republican.

Fresh mortifications awaited Washington, from the distempered state of public sentiment. The trial came on of Gideon Henfield, an American citizen, prosecuted under the advice of the Attorney-General, for having enlisted, at Charleston, on board of a French privateer which had brought prizes into the port of Philadelphia. The populace took part with Henfield.

He had enlisted before the proclamation of neutrality had been published, and even if he had enlisted at a later date, was he to be punished for engaging with their ancient ally, France, in the cause of liberty against the royal despots of Europe? His acquittal exposed Washington to the obloquy of having attempted a measure which the laws would not justify. It showed him, moreover, the futility of attempts at punishment for infractions of the rules proclaimed for the preservation of neutrality; while the clamorous rejoicing by which the acquittal of Henfield had been celebrated, evinced the popular disposition to thwart that line of policy which he considered most calculated to promote the public good. Nothing, however, could induce him to swerve from that policy. "I have consolation within," said he, "that no earthly effort can deprive me of, and that is, that neither ambitious nor interested motives have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well pointed, can never reach the most vulnerable part of me; though, whilst I am set up as a *mark* they will be continually aimed."<sup>1</sup>

Hitherto Washington had exercised great forbearance toward the French minister, notwithstanding the little respect shown by the latter to the rights of the United States; but the official communications of Genet were becoming too offensive and insulting to be longer tolerated. Meetings of the heads of departments and the Attorney-General were held at the President's on the 1st and 2d of August, in which the whole of the official correspondence and conduct of Genet was passed in review; and it was agreed that his recall should be desired. Jefferson recommended that the desire should be expressed with great delicacy; the others were for peremptory terms. Knox was for sending him off at once, but this proposition was generally scouted. In the end it was agreed that a letter should be written to Gouverneur Morris, giving a statement of the case, with accompanying documents, that he might lay the whole before the executive council of France, and explain the reason for desiring the recall of Mr. Genet.

It was proposed that a publication of the whole correspondence, and a statement of the proceedings, should be made by way of appeal to the people. This produced animated debates. Hamilton spoke with great warmth in favor of an appeal. Jefferson opposed it. "Genet," said he, "will appeal also; it will become a contest between the President and Genet.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Governor Lee. Sparks, x. 359.

Anonymous writers will take it up. There will be the same difference of opinion in *public* as in our cabinet — there will be the same difference in *Congress*, for it must be laid before them. It would work, therefore, very unpleasantly *at home*. How would it work *abroad*?"

Washington, already weary and impatient, under the incessant dissensions of his cabinet, was stung by the suggestion that he might be held up as in conflict with Genet, and subjected, as he had been, to the ribaldry of the press. At this unlucky moment Knox blundered forth with a specimen of the scandalous libels already in circulation; a pasquinade lately printed, called the Funeral of George Washington, wherein the President was represented as placed upon a guillotine, a horrible parody on the late decapitation of the French King. "The President," writes Jefferson, "now burst forth into one of those transports of passion beyond his control; inveighed against the personal abuse which had been bestowed upon him, and defied any man on earth to produce a single act of his since he had been in the government that had not been done on the purest motives.

"He had never repented but once the having slipped the moment of resigning his office, and that was every moment since. In the agony of his heart he declared that he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made emperor of the world — and yet, said he, indignantly, they are charging me with wanting to be a king!

"All were silent during this burst of feeling — a pause ensued — it was difficult to resume the question. Washington, however, who had recovered his equanimity, put an end to the difficulty. There was no necessity, he said, for deciding the matter at present; the propositions agreed to, respecting the letter to Mr. Morris, might be put into a train of execution, and, perhaps, events would show whether the appeal would be necessary or not."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, ix. 164.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

THREATENED DISSOLUTION OF THE CABINET—ACTION BETWEEN THE AMBUSCADE AND BOSTON—TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF THE FORMER TO NEW YORK—A FRENCH FLEET ARRIVES SAME DAY—EXCITEMENT OF THE PEOPLE—GENET ARRIVES IN THE MIDST OF IT—HIS ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION—IS INFORMED BY JEFFERSON OF THE MEASURES FOR HIS RECALL—HIS RAGE AND REPLY—DECLINE OF HIS POPULARITY.

WASHINGTON had hitherto been annoyed and perplexed by having to manage a divided cabinet; he was now threatened with that cabinet's dissolution. Mr. Hamilton had informed him by letter, that private as well as public reasons had determined him to retire from office towards the close of the next session; probably with a view to give Congress an opportunity to examine into his conduct. Now came a letter from Mr. Jefferson, dated July 31, in which he recalled the circumstances which had induced him to postpone for a while his original intention for retiring from office at the close of the first four years of the republic. These circumstances, he observed, had now ceased to such a degree as to leave him free to think again of a day on which to withdraw; "at the close, therefore, of the ensuing month of September, I shall beg leave to retire to scenes of greater tranquillity from those for which I am every day more and more convinced that neither my talents, tone of mind, nor time of life fit me."

Washington was both grieved and embarrassed by this notification. Full of concern, he called upon Jefferson at his country residence near Philadelphia; pictured his deep distress at finding himself, in the present perplexing juncture of affairs, about to be deserted by those of his cabinet on whose counsel he had counted, and whose places he knew not where to find persons competent to supply; and, in his chagrin, again expressed his repentance that he himself had not resigned as he had once meditated.

The public mind, he went on to observe, was in an alarming state of ferment: political combinations of various kinds were forming; where all this would end he knew not. A new Congress was to assemble, more numerous than the last, perhaps of a different spirit; the first expressions of its sentiments would be important, and it would relieve him considerably if

Jefferson would remain in office, if it were only until the end of the season.

Jefferson, in reply, pleaded an excessive repugnance to public life; and, what seems to have influenced him more sensibly, the actual uneasiness of his position. He was obliged, he said, to move in exactly the circle which he knew to bear him peculiar hatred; "the wealthy aristocrats, the merchants connected closely with England; the newly-created paper fortunes." Thus surrounded, his words were caught, multiplied, misconstrued, and even fabricated, and spread abroad to his injury.

Mr. Jefferson pleaded, moreover, that the opposition of views between Mr. Hamilton and himself was peculiarly unpleasant, and destructive of the necessary harmony. With regard to the republican party he was sure it had not a view which went to the frame of the government; he believed the next Congress would attempt nothing material but to render their own body independent; the manœuvres of Mr. Genet might produce some little embarrassment, but the republicans would abandon that functionary the moment they knew the nature of his conduct.

Washington replied, that he believed the views of the republican party to be perfectly pure: "but when men put a machine into motion," said he, "it is impossible for them to stop it exactly where they would choose, or to say where it will stop. The Constitution we have is an excellent one, if we can keep it where it is."

He again adverted to Jefferson's constant suspicion that there was a party disposed to change the Constitution into a monarchical form, declaring that there was not a man in the United States who would set his face more decidedly against such a change than himself.

"No rational man in the United States suspects you of any other disposition," cried Jefferson; "but there does not pass a week in which we cannot prove declarations dropping from the monarchical party, that our government is good for nothing; is a milk-and-water thing which cannot support itself; that we must knock it down and set up something with more energy."

"If that is the case," rejoined Washington, "it is a proof of their insanity, for the republican spirit of the Union is so manifest and so solid that it is astonishing how any one can expect to move it."

We have only Jefferson's account of this and other interesting interviews of a confidential nature which he had with the President, and we give them generally almost in his own words, through which, partial as they may have been, we discern Wash-

ington's constant efforts to moderate the growing antipathies between the eminent men whom he had sought to assist him in conducting the government. He continued to have the highest opinion of Jefferson's abilities, his knowledge of foreign affairs, his thorough patriotism; and it was his earnest desire to retain him in his cabinet through the whole of the ensuing session of Congress; before the close of which he trusted the affairs of the country relating to foreign powers, Indian disturbances, and internal policy, would have taken a more decisive, and it was to be hoped agreeable form than they then had. A compromise was eventually made, according to which Jefferson was to be allowed a temporary absence in the autumn, and on his return was to continue in office until January.

In the mean time Genet had proceeded to New York, which very excitable city was just then in a great agitation. The frigate *Ambuscade*, while anchored in the harbor, had been challenged to single combat by the British frigate *Boston*, Captain Courtney, which was cruising off the Hook. The challenge was accepted; a severe action ensued; Courtney was killed; and the *Boston*, much damaged, was obliged to stand for Halifax. The *Ambuscade* returned triumphant to New York, and entered the port amid the enthusiastic cheers of the populace. On the same day, a French fleet of fifteen sail arrived from the Chesapeake and anchored in the Hudson River. The officers and crews were objects of unbounded favor with all who inclined to the French cause. Bompard, the commander of the *Ambuscade*, was the hero of the day. Tri-colored cockades, and tri-colored ribbons were to be seen on every side, and rude attempts to chant the *Marseilles Hymn* and the *Carmagnole* resounded through the streets.

In the midst of this excitement, the ringing of the bells and the firing of cannon announced that Citizen Genet was arrived at Powles Hook Ferry, directly opposite the city. There was an immediate assemblage of the republican party in the fields now called the Park. A committee was appointed to escort Genet into the city. He entered it amid the almost frantic cheerings of the populace. Addresses were made to him, expressing devoted attachment to the French republic, and abjuring all neutrality in regard to its heroic struggle. "The cause of France is the cause of America," cried the enthusiasts, "it is time to distinguish its friends from its foes." Genet looked round him. The tri-colored cockade figured in the hats of the shouting multitude; tri-colored ribbons fluttered from the dresses of females in the windows; the French flag was hoisted

on the top of the Tontine Coffee House (the City Exchange), surmounted by the cap of liberty. Can we wonder that that little discretion Genet possessed was completely overborne by this tide of seeming popularity?

In the midst of his self-gratulation and complacency, however, he received a letter from Jefferson (September 15), acquainting him with the measures taken to procure his recall, and enclosing a copy of the letter written for that purpose to the American minister at Paris. It was added that, out of anxious regard lest the interests of France might suffer, the Executive would, in the mean time, receive his (Mr. Genet's) communications in writing, and admit the continuance of his functions so long as they should be restrained within the law as theretofore announced to him, and should be of the tenor usually observed towards independent nations, by the representative of a friendly power residing with them.

The letter of the Secretary of State threw Genet into a violent passion, and produced a reply (September 18), written while he was still in a great heat. In this he attributed his disfavor with the American government to the machinations of "those gentlemen who had so often been represented to him as aristocrats, partisans of monarchy, partisans of England and her constitution, and consequently enemies of the principles which all good Frenchmen had embraced with religious enthusiasm." "These persons," he said, "alarmed by the popularity which the zeal of the American people for the cause of France had shed upon her minister; alarmed also by his inflexible and incorruptible attachment to the severe maxims of democracy, were striving to ruin him in his own country, after having united all their efforts to calumniate him in the minds of their fellow-citizens."

"These people," observes he, "instead of a democratic ambassador, would prefer a minister of the ancient régime, very complaisant, very gentle, very disposed to pay court to people in office, to conform blindly to every thing which flattered their views and projects; above all, to prefer to the sure and modest society of good farmers, simple citizens, and honest artisans, that of distinguished personages who speculate so patriotically in the public funds, in the lands, and the paper of government."

In his heat, Genet resented the part Mr. Jefferson had taken, notwithstanding their cordial intimacy, in the present matter, although this part had merely been the discharge of an official duty. "Whatever, sir," writes Genet, "may be the result of the exploit of which you have rendered yourself the generous

instrument, after having made me believe that you were my friend, after having initiated me in the mysteries which have influenced my hatred against all those who aspire to absolute power, there is an act of justice which the American people, which the French people, which all free people are interested in demanding; it is, that a particular inquiry should be made, in the approaching Congress, into the motives which have induced the chief of the executive power of the United States to take upon himself to demand the recall of a public minister, whom the sovereign people of the United States had received fraternally and recognized, before the diplomatic forms had been fulfilled in respect to him at Philadelphia."

The wrongs of which Genet considered himself entitled to complain against the Executive, commenced before his introduction to that functionary. It was the proclamation of neutrality which first grieved his spirit. "I was extremely wounded," writes he, "that the President of the United States should haste, before knowing what I had to transmit on the part of the French republic, to proclaim sentiments over which decency and friendship should at least have thrown a veil."

He was grieved, moreover, that on his first audience, the President had spoken only of the friendship of the United States for France, without uttering a word or expressing a single sentiment in regard to its revolution, although all the towns, all the villages from Charleston to Philadelphia, had made the air resound with their ardent voices for the French republic. And what further grieved his spirit was, to observe "that this first magistrate of a free people had decorated his saloon with certain medallions of Capet [meaning Louis XVI.] and his family, which served in Paris for rallying signs."

We forbear to cite further this angry and ill-judged letter. Unfortunately for Genet's ephemeral popularity, a rumor got abroad that he had expressed a determination to appeal from the President to the people. This at first was contradicted, but was ultimately established by a certificate of Chief Justice Jay and Mr. Rufus King, of the United States Senate, which was published in the papers.

The spirit of audacity thus manifested by a foreign minister shocked the national pride. Meetings were held in every part of the Union to express the public feeling in the matter. In these meetings the proclamation of neutrality and the system of measures flowing from it, were sustained, partly from a conviction of their wisdom and justice, but more from an undiminished affection for the person and character of Washington;



for many who did not espouse his views, were ready to support him in the exercise of his constitutional functions. The warm partisans of Genet, however, were the more vehement in his support from the temporary ascendancy of the other party. They advocated his right to appeal from the President to the people. The President, they argued, was invested with no sanctity to make such an act criminal. In a republican country the people were the real sovereigns.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

NEUTRALITY ENDANGERED BY GREAT BRITAIN — HER ILL-ADVISED MEASURES — DETENTION OF VESSELS BOUND FOR FRANCE — IMPRESSMENT OF AMERICAN SEAMEN — PERSISTENCE IN HOLDING THE WESTERN POSTS — CONGRESS ASSEMBLES IN DECEMBER — THE PRESIDENT'S OPENING SPEECH — HIS CENSURE OF GENET — THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S ALLUSION TO IT — THE ADMINISTRATION IN A MINORITY IN THE HOUSE — PROCLAMATION OF NEUTRALITY SUSTAINED — JEFFERSON'S REPORT — RETIRES FROM THE CABINET — HIS PARTING REBUKE TO GENET — HIS CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON.

WHILE the neutrality of the United States, so jealously guarded by Washington, was endangered by the intrigues of the French minister, it was put to imminent hazard by ill-advised measures of the British cabinet.

There was such a scarcity in France, in consequence of the failure of the crops, that a famine was apprehended. England, availing herself of her naval ascendancy, determined to increase the distress of her rival by cutting off all her supplies from abroad. In June, 1793, therefore, her cruisers were instructed to detain all vessels bound to France with cargoes of corn, flour, or meal, take them into port, unload them, purchase the cargoes, make a proper allowance for the freight, and then release the vessels; or to allow the masters of them, on a stipulated security, to dispose of their cargoes in a port in amity with England. This measure gave umbrage to all parties in the United States, and brought out an earnest remonstrance from the government, as being a violation of the law of neutrals, and indefensible on any proper construction of the law of nations.

Another grievance which helped to swell the tide of resent-

ment against Great Britain, was the frequent impressment of American seamen, a wrong to which they were particularly exposed from national similarity.

To these may be added the persistence of Great Britain in holding the posts to the south of the lakes, which, according to treaty stipulations, ought to have been given up. Washington did not feel himself in a position to press our rights under the treaty, with the vigorous hand that some would urge; questions having risen in some of the State courts, to obstruct the fulfilment of our part of it, which regarded the payment of British debts contracted before the war.

The violent partisans of France thought nothing of these shortcomings on our own part; and would have had the forts seized at once; but Washington considered a scrupulous discharge of our own obligations the necessary preliminary, should so violent a measure be deemed advisable. His prudent and conscientious conduct in this particular, so in unison with the impartial justice which governed all his actions, was cited by partisan writers, as indicative of his preference of England to "our ancient ally."

The hostilities of the Indians north of the Ohio, by many attributed to British wiles, still continued. The attempts at an amiable negotiation had proved as fruitless as Washington had anticipated. The troops under Wayne had, therefore, taken the field to act offensively; but from the lateness of the season, had formed a winter camp near the site of the present city of Cincinnati, whence Wayne was to open his campaign in the ensuing spring.

Congress assembled on the 2d of December (1793), with various causes of exasperation at work; the intrigues of Genet and the aggressions of England, uniting to aggravate to a degree of infatuation the partiality for France, and render imminent the chance of a foreign war.

Washington, in his opening speech, after expressing his deep and respectful sense of the renewed testimony of public approbation manifested in his re-election, proceeded to state the measures he had taken, in consequence of the war in Europe, to protect the rights and interests of the United States, and maintain peaceful relations with the belligerent parties. Still he pressed upon Congress the necessity of placing the country in a condition of complete defence. "The United States," said he, "ought not to indulge a persuasion that, contrary to the order of human events, they will forever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms with which the history of every

nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace—one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity—it must be known that we are, at all times, ready for war.” In the spirit of these remarks, he urged measures to increase the amount of arms and ammunition in the arsenals, and to improve the militia establishment.

One part of his speech conveyed an impressive admonition to the House of Representatives: “No pecuniary consideration is more urgent than the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt; in none can delay be more injurious, or an economy of time more valuable.”

The necessity of augmenting the public revenue in a degree commensurate with the object suggested, was likewise touched upon.

In concluding his speech, he endeavored to impress upon his hearers the magnitude of their task, the important interests confided to them, and the conscientiousness that should reign over their deliberations. “Without an unprejudiced coolness, the welfare of the government may be hazarded; without harmony, as far as consists with freedom of sentiment, its dignity may be lost. But, as the legislative proceedings of the United States will never, I trust, be reproached for the want of temper or of candor, so shall not the public happiness languish from the want of my strenuous and warmest co-operation.”

In a message to both Houses, on the 5th of December, concerning foreign relations, Washington spoke feelingly with regard to those with the representative and executive bodies of France; “It is with extreme concern I have to inform you that the proceedings of the person whom they have unfortunately appointed their minister plenipotentiary here, have breathed nothing of the friendly spirit of the nation which sent him; their tendency, on the contrary, has been to involve us in war abroad, and discord and anarchy at home. So far as his acts, or those of his agents, have threatened our immediate commitment in the war, or flagrant insult to the authority of the laws, their effect has been counteracted by the ordinary cognizance of the laws, and by an exertion of the powers confided to me. Where their danger was not imminent, they have been borne with, from sentiments of regard for his nation; from a sense of their friendship towards us; from a conviction, that they would not suffer us to remain long exposed to the action

of a person, who has so little respected our mutual dispositions; and, I will add, from a reliance on the firmness of my fellow-citizens in their principles of peace and order."

John Adams, speaking on this passage of the message, says: "The President has given Genet a bolt of thunder." He questioned, however, whether Washington would be supported in it by the two Houses — "although he stands at present as high in the admiration and confidence of the people as ever he did, I expect he will find many bitter and desperate enemies arise in consequence of his just judgment against Genet."

In fact, the choice of speaker showed that there was a majority of ten against the administration in the House of Representatives; yet it was manifest, from the affectionate answer on the 6th of the two Houses, to Washington's speech, and the satisfaction expressed at his re-election, that he was not included in the opposition which, from this act, appeared to await his political system. The House did justice to the purity and patriotism of the motives which had prompted him again to obey the voice of his country, when called by it to the Presidential chair. "It is to virtues which have commanded long and universal reverence, and services from which have flowed great and lasting benefits, that the tribute of praise may be paid, without the reproach of flattery; and it is from the same sources that the fairest anticipations may be derived in favor of the public happiness."

Notwithstanding the popular ferment in favor of France, both Houses seem to have approved the course pursued by Washington in regard to that country; and as to his proclamation of neutrality, while the House approved of it in guarded terms, the Senate pronounced it a "measure well-timed and wise; manifesting a watchful solicitude for the welfare of the nation, and calculated to promote it."

Early in the session, Mr. Jefferson, in compliance with a requisition which the House of Representatives had made, February 23, 1791, furnished an able and comprehensive report of the state of trade of the United States with different countries; the nature and extent of exports and imports, and the amount of tonnage of the American shipping: specifying, also, the various restrictions and prohibitions by which our commerce was embarrassed, and, in some instances, almost ruined. "Two methods," he said, "presented themselves, by which these impediments might be removed, modified, or counteracted;

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mrs. Adams. *Life*, vol. i. p. 460.

friendly arrangement or countervailing legislation. Friendly arrangements were preferable with all who would come into them, and we should carry into such arrangements all the liberality and spirit of accommodation which the nature of the case would admit. But," he adds, "should any nation continue its system of prohibitive duties and regulations, it behooves us to protect our citizens, their commerce, and navigation, by counter prohibitions, duties, and regulations." To effect this, he suggested a series of legislative measures of a retaliatory kind.<sup>1</sup>

With this able and elaborate report, Jefferson closed his labors as Secretary of State. His last act was a kind of parting gun to Mr. Genet. This restless functionary had, on the 20th of December, sent to him translations of the instructions given him by the executive council of France; desiring that the President would lay them officially before both Houses of Congress, and proposing to transmit successively, other papers to be laid before them in like manner.

Jefferson, on the 31st of December, informed Genet that he had laid his letter and its accompaniments before the President. "I have it in charge to observe," adds he, "that your functions as the missionary of a foreign nation here, are confined to the transactions of the affairs of your nation with the Executive of the United States; that the communications which are to pass between the executive and legislative branches, cannot be a subject for your interference, and that the President must be left to judge for himself what matters his duty or the public good may require him to propose to the deliberations of Congress. I have, therefore, the honor of returning you the copies sent for distribution, and of being, with great respect, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant."

Such was Jefferson's dignified rebuke of the presumptuous meddling of Genet, and indeed his whole course of official proceedings with that minister, notwithstanding his personal intimacy with him and his strong French partialities, is worthy of the highest approbation. Genet, in fact, who had calculated on Jefferson's friendship, charged him openly with having a language official and a language confidential, but it certainly was creditable to him, as a public functionary in a place of high trust, that, in his official transactions, he would rise superior to individual prejudices and partialities, and consult only the dignity and interests of his country.

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<sup>1</sup> See Jefferson's Works, vol. vii.

Washington had been especially sensible of the talents and integrity displayed by Jefferson during the closing year of his secretaryship, and particularly throughout this French perplexity, and had recently made a last attempt, but an unsuccessful one, to persuade him to remain in the cabinet. On the same day with his letter to Genet, Jefferson addressed one to Washington, reminding him of his having postponed his retirement from office until the end of the annual year. "That term being now arrived," writes he, "and my propensities to retirement becoming daily more and more irresistible, I now take the liberty of resigning the office into your hands. Be pleased to accept with it my sincere thanks for all the indulgences which you have been so good as to exercise towards me in the discharge of its duties. Conscious that my need of them has been great, I have still ever found them greater, without any other claim on my part than a firm pursuit of what has appeared to me to be right, and a thorough disdain of all means which were not as open and honorable as their object was pure. I carry into my retirement a lively sense of your goodness, and shall continue gratefully to remember it."

The following was Washington's reply: "Since it has been impossible to prevent you to forego any longer the indulgence of your desire for private life, the event, however anxious I am to avert it, must be submitted to.

"But I cannot suffer you to leave your station without assuring you, that the opinion which I had formed of your integrity and talents, and which dictated your original nomination, has been confirmed by the fullest experience, and that both have been eminently displayed in the discharge of your duty."

The place thus made vacant in the cabinet was filled by Mr. Edmond Randolph, whose office of Attorney-General was conferred on Mr. William Bradford of Pennsylvania.

No one seemed to throw off the toils of office with more delight than Jefferson; or to betake himself with more devotion to the simple occupations of rural life. It was his boast, in a letter to a friend written some time after his return to Monticello, that he had seen no newspaper since he had left Philadelphia, and he believed he should never take another newspaper of any sort. "I think it is Montaigne," writes he, "who has said, that ignorance is the softest pillow on which a man can rest his head. I am sure it is true as to every thing political, and shall endeavor to estrange myself to every thing of that character." Yet the very next sentence shows the lurking of the old party feud. "I indulge myself in one political topic

only — that is, in declaring to my countrymen the shameless corruption of a portion of the representatives of the first and second Congresses, *and their implicit devotion to the treasury.*"<sup>1</sup>

We subjoin his comprehensive character of Washington, the result of long observation and cabinet experience, and written in after years, when there was no temptation to insincere eulogy:—

"His integrity was most pure; his justice the most inflexible I have ever known; no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the word, a wise, a good, and a great man.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

DEBATE ON JEFFERSON'S REPORT ON COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE — A NAVAL FORCE PROPOSED FOR THE PROTECTION OF COMMERCE AGAINST PIRATICAL CRUISERS — FURTHER INSTANCES OF THE AUDACITY OF GENET — HIS RECALL — ARRIVAL OF HIS SUCCESSOR — IRRITATION EXCITED BY BRITISH CAPTURES OF AMERICAN VESSELS — PREPARATIONS FOR DEFENCE — EMBARGO — INTENSE EXCITEMENT AT "BRITISH SPOILIATIONS" — PARTISANS OF FRANCE IN THE ASCENDANT — A CHANCE FOR ACCOMMODATING DIFFICULTIES — JEFFERSON'S HOPES OF RECONCILIATION — THE WAR CRY UPPERMOST — WASHINGTON DETERMINES TO SEND A SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT — JEFFERSON'S LETTER TO TENCH COXE.

PUBLIC affairs were becoming more and more complicated, and events in Europe were full of gloomy portent. "The news of this evening," writes John Adams to his wife, on the 9th of January, "is, that the queen of France is no more. When will savages be satisfied with blood? No prospect of peace in Europe, therefore none of internal harmony in America. We cannot well be in a more disagreeable situation than we are with all Europe, with all Indians, and with all Barbary rovers. Nearly one-half of the continent is in constant opposition to the other, and the President's situation, which is highly responsible, is very distressing."

Adams speaks of having had two hours' conversation with Washington alone in his cabinet, but intimates that he could

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to E. Randolph. Works, iv. 103.

not reveal the purport of it, even by a hint; it had satisfied him, however, of Washington's earnest desire to do right; his close application to discover it, and his deliberate and comprehensive view of our affairs with all the world. "The anti-federalists and the Frenchified zealots," adds Adams, "have nothing now to do that I can conceive of, but to ruin his character, destroy his peace, and injure his health. He supports all their attacks with firmness, and his health appears to be very good."<sup>1</sup>

The report of Mr. Jefferson on commercial intercourse, was soon taken up in the House in a committee of the whole. A series of resolutions based on it, and relating to the privileges and restrictions of the commerce of the United States, were introduced by Mr. Madison, and became the subject of a warm and acrimonious debate. The report upheld the policy of turning the course of trade from England to France, by discriminations in favor of the latter; and the resolutions were to the same purport. The idea was to oppose commercial resistance to commercial injury; to enforce a perfect commercial equality by retaliating impositions, assuming that the commercial system of Great Britain was hostile to the United States — a position strongly denied by some of the debaters.

Though the subject was, or might seem to be, of a purely commercial nature, it was inevitably mixed up with political considerations, according as a favorable inclination to England or France was apprehended. The debate waxed warm as it proceeded, with a strong infusion of bitterness. Fisher Ames stigmatized the resolutions as having *French* stamped upon the very face of them. Whereupon, Colonel Parker of Virginia wished that there were a stamp on the forehead of every one to designate whether he were for France or England. For himself, he would not be silent and hear that nation abused, to whom America was indebted for her rank as a nation. There was a burst of applause in the gallery; but the indecorum was rebuked by the galleries being cleared.

The debate, which had commenced on the 13th of January (1794), was protracted to the 3d of February, when the question being taken on the first resolution, it was carried by a majority of only five, so nearly were parties divided. The further consideration of the remaining resolutions was postponed to March, when it was resumed, but, in consequence of the new complexion of affairs, was suspended without a decision.

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<sup>1</sup> Life of John Adams, vol. i. p. 461.



The next legislative movement was also productive of a warm debate, though connected with a subject which appealed to the sympathies of the whole nation. Algerine corsairs had captured eleven American merchant vessels, and upwards of one hundred prisoners, and the regency manifested a disposition for further outrages. A bill was introduced into Congress proposing a force of six frigates, to protect the commerce of the United States against the cruisers of this piratical power. The bill met with strenuous opposition. The force would require time to prepare it; and would then be insufficient. It might be laying the foundation of a large permanent navy and a great public debt. It would be cheaper to purchase the friendship of Algiers with money, as was done by other nations of superior maritime force, or to purchase the protection of those nations. It seems hardly credible at the present day, that such policy could have been urged before an American Congress, without provoking a burst of scorn and indignation; yet it was heard without any emotion of the kind; and, though the bill was eventually passed by both Houses, it was but by a small majority. It received the hearty assent of the President.

In the course of this session, fresh instances had come before the government of the mischievous activity and audacity of Genet; showing that, not content with compromising the neutrality of the United States at sea, he was attempting to endanger it by land. From documents received, it appeared that in November he had sent emissaries to Kentucky, to enroll American citizens in an expedition against New Orleans and the Spanish possessions; furnishing them with blank commissions for the purpose.<sup>1</sup> It was an enterprise in which the adventurous people of that State were ready enough to embark, through enthusiasm for the French nation and impatience at the delay of Spain to open the navigation of the Mississippi. Another expedition was to proceed against the Floridas; men for the purpose to be enlisted at the South, to rendezvous in Georgia, and to be aided by a body of Indians and by a French fleet, should one arrive on the coast.

A proclamation from Governor Moultrie checked all such enlistments in South Carolina, but brought forth a letter from Genet to Mr. Jefferson, denying that he had endeavored to raise an armed force in that State for the service of the republic: "At the same time," adds he, "I am too frank to conceal from you that, authorized by the French nation to deliver

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<sup>1</sup> American State Papers, ii. 36.

brevets to such of your fellow-citizens who feel animated by a desire to serve the fairest of causes, I have accorded them to several brave republicans of South Carolina, whose intention appeared to me to be, in expatriating themselves, to go among the tribes of independent Indians, ancient friends and allies of France, to inflict, if they could, in concert with them, the harm to Spaniards and Englishmen, which the governments of those two nations had the baseness to do for a long time to your fellow-citizens, under the name of these savages, the same as they have done recently under that of the Algerines."

Documents relating to these transactions were communicated to Congress by Washington, early in January. But, though the expedition set on foot in South Carolina had been checked, it was subsequently reported that the one in Kentucky against Louisiana, was still in progress and about to descend the Ohio.

These schemes showed such determined purpose, on the part of Genet, to undermine the peace of the United States, that Washington, without waiting a reply to the demand for his recall, resolved to keep no further terms with that headlong diplomat. The dignity, possibly the safety of the United States, depended upon immediate measures.

In a cabinet council it was determined to supersede Genet's diplomatic functions, deprive him of the consequent privileges, and arrest his person; a message to Congress, avowing such determination, was prepared, but at this critical juncture came despatches from Gouverneur Morris, announcing Genet's recall.

The French minister of foreign affairs had, in fact, reprobated the conduct of Genet as unauthorized by his instructions, and deserving of punishment, and Mr. Fauchet, secretary of the executive council, was appointed to succeed him. Mr. Fauchet arrived in the United States in February.

About this time vigilance was required to guard against wrongs from an opposite quarter. We have noticed the orders issued by Great Britain to her cruisers in June, 1793, and the resentment thereby excited in the United States. On the 6th of the following month of November, she had given them additional instructions to detain all vessels laden with the produce of any colony belonging to France, or carrying supplies to any such colony, and to bring them, with their cargoes, to British ports, for adjudication in the British courts of admiralty.

Captures of American vessels were taking place in consequence of these orders, and heightening public irritation. They were considered indicative of determined hostility on the part of Great Britain, and they produced measures in Congress pre-

paratory to an apprehended state of war. An embargo was laid, prohibiting all trade from the United States to any foreign place for the space of thirty days, and vigorous preparations for defence were adopted with but little opposition.

On the 27th of March, resolutions were moved that all debts due to British subjects be sequestered and paid into the treasury, as a fund to indemnify citizens of the United States for depredations sustained from British cruisers, and that all intercourse with Great Britain be interdicted until she had made compensation for these injuries, and until she should make surrender of the Western posts.

The popular excitement was intense. Meetings were held on the subject of British spoiliations. "Peace or war" was the absorbing question. The partisans of France were now in the ascendant. It was scouted as pusillanimous any longer to hold terms with England. "No doubt," said they, "she despises the proclamation of neutrality, as an evidence of timidity; every motive of self-respect calls on the people of the United States to show a proper spirit."

It was suggested that those who were in favor of resisting British aggressions should mount the tri-colored cockade; and forthwith it was mounted by many; while a democratic society was formed to correspond with the one at Philadelphia, and aid in giving effect to these popular sentiments.

While the public mind was in this inflammable state, Washington received advices from Mr. Pinckney, the American minister in London, informing him that the British ministry had issued instructions to the commanders of armed vessels, revoking those of the 6th of November, 1793. Lord Grenville also, in conversation with Mr. Pinckney, had explained the real motives for that order, showing that, however oppressive in its execution, it had not been intended for the special vexation of American commerce.

Washington laid Pinckney's letter before Congress on the 4th of April. It had its effect on both parties; Federalists saw in it a chance of accommodating difficulties, and, therefore, opposed all measures calculated to irritate; the other party did not press their belligerent propositions to any immediate decision, but showed no solicitude to avoid a rupture.

Jefferson, though reputed to be the head of the French party, avowed in a letter to Madison his hope that war would not result, but that justice would be obtained in a peaceable way;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, vol. iv. p. 102.

and he repeats the hope in a subsequent letter. "My countrymen," writes he, "are groaning under the insults of Great Britain. I hope some means will turn up of reconciling our faith and honor with peace. I confess to you, I have seen enough of one war never to wish to see another."<sup>1</sup>

"'Tis as great an error," writes Hamilton, at the same time, "for a nation to overrate as to underrate itself. Presumption is as great a fault as timidity. 'Tis our error to overrate ourselves and underrate Great Britain; we forget how little we can annoy, how much we may be annoyed."<sup>2</sup>

The war cry, however, is too obvious a means of popular excitement to be readily given up. Busy partisans saw that the feeling of the populace was belligerent, and every means were taken by the press and the democratic societies to exasperate this feeling; according to them the crisis called, not for moderation, but for decision, for energy. Still to adhere to a neutral position, would argue tameness — cowardice! Washington, however, was too morally brave to be clamored out of his wise moderation by such taunts. He resolved to prevent a war if possible, by an appeal to British justice, to be made through a special envoy, who should represent to the British government the injuries we had sustained from it in various ways, and should urge indemnification.

The measure was decried by the party favorable to France, as an undue advance to the British government; but they were still more hostile to it when it was rumored that Hamilton was to be chosen for the mission. A member of the House of Representatives addressed a strong letter to the President, deprecating the mission, but especially the reputed choice of the envoy. James Monroe, also, at that time a member of the Senate, remonstrated against the nomination of Hamilton, as injurious to the public interest, and to the interest of Washington himself, and offered to explain his reasons to the latter in a private interview.

Washington declined the interview, but requested Mr. Monroe, if possessed of any facts which would disqualify Mr. Hamilton for the mission, to communicate them to him in writing.

"Colonel Hamilton and others have been mentioned," adds he, "but no one is yet absolutely decided upon in my mind. But as much will depend, among other things, upon the abilities

<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's Works, vol. iv. p. 104. Letter to John Adams.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton's Works, iv. 528.

of the person sent, and his knowledge of the affairs of this country, and as I alone am responsible for a proper nomination, it certainly behooves me to name such a one as, in my judgment, combines the requisites for a mission so peculiarly interesting to the peace and happiness of this country."

Hamilton, however, aware of the "collateral obstacles" which existed with respect to himself, had resolved to advise Washington to drop him from the consideration and to fix upon another character; and recommended John Jay, the Chief Justice of the United States, as the man whom it would be advisable to send. "I think," writes he, "the business would have the best chance possible in his hands, and I flatter myself, that his mission would issue in a manner that would produce the most important good to the nation."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Jay was the person ultimately chosen. Washington, in his message, thus nominating an additional envoy to Great Britain, expressed undiminished confidence in the minister actually in London. "But a mission like this," observes he, "while it corresponds with the solemnity of the occasion, will announce to the world a solicitude for a friendly adjustment of our complaints and a reluctance to hostility. Going immediately from the United States, such an envoy will carry with him a full knowledge of the existing temper and sensibility of our country, and will thus be taught to vindicate our rights with firmness, and to cultivate peace with sincerity."

The nomination was approved by a majority of ten Senators.

By this sudden and decisive measure Washington sought to stay the precipitate impulses of public passion; to give time to put the country into a complete state of defence, and to provide such other measures as might be necessary if negotiation, in a reasonable time, should prove unsuccessful.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the nomination of the envoy, the resolution to cut off intercourse with Great Britain passed the House of Representatives, and was only lost in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice-President, which was given, according to general belief, "not from a disinclination to the ulterior expedience of the measure, but from a desire," previously, "to try the effect of negotiation."<sup>3</sup>

While Washington was thus endeavoring to steer the vessel of State, amid the surges and blasts which were threatening on every side, Jefferson, who had hauled out of the storm, writes

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's Works, vol. iv. p. 531.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Edmund Randolph. Writings, x. 408.

<sup>3</sup> Washington to Tobias Lear. Writings, x. 401.

serenely from his retirement at Monticello, to his friend Tench Coxe at Paris :

“ Your letters give a comfortable view of French affairs, and later events seem to confirm it. Over the foreign powers, I am convinced they will triumph completely, and I cannot but hope that that triumph, and the consequent disgrace of the invading tyrants, is destined, in order of events, to kindle the wrath of Europe against those who have dared to embroil them in such wickedness, and to bring, at length, kings, nobles, and priests, to the scaffolds which they have been so long deluging with human blood. I am still warm whenever I think of these scoundrels, though I do it as seldom as I can, preferring infinitely to contemplate the tranquil growth of my lucerne and potatoes. I have so completely withdrawn myself from these spectacles of usurpation and misrule, that I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month ; and I feel myself infinitely the happier for it.” <sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

JAMES MONROE APPOINTED MINISTER TO FRANCE IN PLACE OF GOUVERNEUR MORRIS RECALLED — HIS RECEPTION — PENNSYLVANIA INSURRECTION — PROCLAMATION OF WASHINGTON — PERSEVERANCE OF THE INSURGENTS — SECOND PROCLAMATION — THE PRESIDENT PROCEEDS AGAINST THEM — GENERAL MORGAN — LAWRENCE LEWIS — WASHINGTON ARRANGES A PLAN OF MILITARY OPERATIONS — RETURNS TO PHILADELPHIA, LEAVING LEE IN COMMAND — SUBMISSION OF THE INSURGENTS — THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER ON THE SUBJECT TO JAY, MINISTER AT LONDON.

THE French government having so promptly complied with the wishes of the American government in recalling citizen Genet, requested, as an act of reciprocity, the recall of Gouverneur Morris, whose political sympathies were considered highly aristocratical. The request was granted accordingly, but Washington, in a letter to Morris, notifying him of his being superseded, assured him of his own undiminished confidence and friendship.

James Monroe, who was appointed in his place, arrived at Paris in a moment of great reaction. Robespierre had terminated his bloody career on the scaffold, and the reign of terror

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<sup>1</sup> Works, iv. 104.

was at end. The new minister from the United States was received in public by the Convention. The sentiments expressed by Monroe on delivering his credentials, were so completely in unison with the feelings of the moment, that the President of the Convention embraced him with emotion, and it was decreed that the American and French flags should be entwined and hung up in the hall of the Convention, in sign of the union and friendship of the two republics.

Chiming in with the popular impulse, Monroe presented the American flag to the Convention, on the part of his country. It was received with enthusiasm, and a decree was passed, that the national flag of France should be transmitted in return, to the government of the United States.

Washington, in the mean time, was becoming painfully aware that censorious eyes at home were keeping a watch upon his administration, and censorious tongues and pens were ready to cavil at every measure. "The affairs of this country cannot go wrong," writes he ironically to Gouverneur Morris; "there are *so many watchful guardians of them*, and such infallible guides, that no one is at a loss for a director at every turn."

This is almost the only instance of irony to be found in his usually plain, direct correspondence, and to us is mournfully suggestive of that soreness and weariness of heart with which he saw his conscientious policy misunderstood or misrepresented, and himself becoming an object of party hostility.

Within three weeks after the date of this letter, an insurrection broke out in the western part of Pennsylvania on account of the excise law. We have already mentioned the riotous opposition this law had experienced. Bills of indictment had been found against some of the rioters. The marshal, when on the way to serve the processes issued by the court, was fired upon by armed men, and narrowly escaped with his life. He was subsequently seized and compelled to renounce the exercise of his official duties. The house of General Nevil, inspector of the revenue, was assailed, but the assailants were repulsed. They assembled in greater numbers; the magistrates and militia officers shrank from interfering, lest it should provoke a general insurrection; a few regular soldiers were obtained from the garrison at Fort Pitt. There was a parley. The insurgents demanded that the inspector and his papers should be given up; and the soldiers march out of the house and ground their arms. The demand being refused, the house was attacked, the out-houses set on fire, and the garrison was compelled to surrender. The marshal and inspector finally escaped

out of the country; descended the Ohio, and, by a circuitous route, found their way to the seat of government; bringing a lamentable tale of their misadventures.

Washington deprecated the result of these outrageous proceedings. "If the laws are to be so trampled upon with impunity," said he, "and a minority, a small one too, is to dictate to the majority, there is an end put, at one stroke, to republican government."

It was intimated that the insurgent district could bring seven thousand men into the field. Delay would only swell the growing disaffection. On the 7th of August Washington issued a proclamation, warning the insurgents to disperse, and declaring that if tranquillity were not restored before the 1st of September, force would be employed to compel submission to the laws. To show that this was not an empty threat, he, on the same day, made a requisition on the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, for militia to compose an army of twelve thousand men; afterwards augmented to fifteen thousand.

In a letter to the governor of Virginia (Light-Horse Harry Lee), he says, "I consider this insurrection as the first formidable fruit of the Democratic Societies, brought forth, I believe, too prematurely for their own views, which may contribute to the annihilation of them.

"That these societies were instituted by the artful and designing members (many of their body, I have no doubt, mean well, but know little of the real plan), primarily to sow among the people the seeds of jealousy and distrust of the government, by destroying all confidence in the administration of it, and that these doctrines have been budding and blowing ever since, is not new to any one who is acquainted with the character of their leaders, and has been attentive to their manœuvres. I early gave it as my opinion to the confidential characters around me, that if these societies were not counteracted (not by prosecutions, the ready way to make them grow stronger), or did not fall into disesteem from the knowledge of their origin, and the views with which they had been instituted by their father, Genet, for purposes well known to the government, they would shake the government to its foundation."

The insurgents manifesting a disposition to persevere in their rebellious conduct, the President issued a second proclamation on the 25th of September, describing in forcible terms, the perverse and obstinate spirit with which the lenient propositions of government had been met, and declaring his fixed



purpose to reduce the refractory to obedience. Shortly after this he left Philadelphia for Carlisle, to join the army, then on its march to suppress the insurrection in the western part of Pennsylvania.

Just as Washington was leaving Philadelphia, a letter was put into his hands from Major-General Morgan. The proclamation had roused the spirit of that revolutionary veteran. He was on his way, he wrote, to join the expedition against the insurgents, having command of a division of the Virginia militia, of which General Lee was commander-in-chief.

Washington replied from Carlisle to his old companion in arms: "Although I regret the occasion which has called you into the field, I rejoice to hear you are there; and it is probable I may meet you at Fort Cumberland, whither I shall proceed as soon as I see the troops at this rendezvous in condition to advance. At that place, or at Bedford, my ulterior resolution must be taken, either to advance with the troops into the insurgent counties of this State, or to return to Philadelphia for the purpose of meeting Congress the 3d of next month.

"Imperious circumstances alone can justify my absence from the seat of government, whilst Congress are in session; but if these, from the disposition of the people in the refractory counties, and the state of the information I expect to receive at the advance posts, should appear to exist, the less must yield to the greater duties of my office, and I shall cross the mountains with the troops; if not, I shall place the command of the combined force under the orders of Governor Lee of Virginia, and repair to the seat of government."

We will here note that Lawrence Lewis, a son of Washington's sister, Mrs. Fielding Lewis, having caught the spirit of arms, accompanied Morgan as aide-de-camp, on this expedition. The prompt zeal with which he volunteered into the service of his country was, doubtless, highly satisfactory to his uncle, with whom, it will be seen, he was a great favorite.

On the 9th of October Washington writes from Carlisle to the Secretary of State: "The insurgents are alarmed, but not yet brought to their proper senses. Every means is devised by them and their friends and associates, to induce a belief that there is no necessity for troops crossing the mountains; although we have information, at the same time, that part of the people there are obliged to embody themselves to repel the insults of another part."

On the 10th, the Pennsylvania troops set out from Carlisle for their rendezvous at Bedford, and Washington proceeded to

Williamsport, thence to go on to Fort Cumberland, the rendezvous of the Virginia and Maryland troops. He arrived at the latter place on the 16th of October, and found a respectable force assembled from those States, and learnt that fifteen hundred more from Virginia were at hand. All accounts agreed that the insurgents were greatly alarmed at the serious appearance of things. "I believe," writes Washington, "the eyes of all the well-disposed people of this country will soon be opened, and that they will clearly see the tendency, if not the design, of the leader of these self-created societies. As far as I have heard them spoken of, it is with strong reprobation."

At Bedford he arranged matters and settled a plan of military operations. The governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, were at the head of the troops of their respective States, but Governor Lee was to have the general command. This done, Washington prepared to shape his course for Philadelphia — "but not," says he indignantly, "because the impertinence of Mr. Bache, or his correspondent, has undertaken to pronounce that I cannot, constitutionally, command the army, whilst Congress is in session."

In a letter to Governor Lee, on leaving him in command, he conveyed to the army the very high sense he entertained "of the enlightened and patriotic zeal for the Constitution and the laws which had led them cheerfully to quit their families, homes, and the comforts of private life, to undertake, and thus far to perform, a long and fatiguing march, and to encounter and endure the hardships and privations of a military life."

"No citizen of the United States," observes he, "can ever be engaged in a service more important to their country. It is nothing less than to consolidate and to preserve the blessings of that Revolution which, at much expense of blood and treasure, constituted us a free and independent nation."

His parting admonition is — "that every officer and soldier will constantly bear in mind, that he comes to support the laws, and that it would be peculiarly unbecoming in him to be, in any way, the infractor of them; that the essential principles of a free government confine the province of the military when called forth on such occasions, to these two objects: first, to combat and subdue all who may be found in arms in opposition to the national will and authority; secondly, to aid and support the civil magistrates in bringing offenders to justice. The dispensation of this justice belongs to the civil magistrates; and let it ever be our pride and our glory to leave the sacred deposit there inviolate."

Washington pushed on for Philadelphia, through deep roads and a three days' rain, and arrived there about the last of October. Governor Lee marched with troops in two divisions, amounting to fifteen thousand men, into the western counties of Pennsylvania. This great military array extinguished at once the kindling elements of a civil war, "by making resistance desperate." At the approach of so overwhelming a force the insurgents laid down their arms, and gave assurance of submission, and craved the clemency of government. It was extended to them. A few were tried for treason, but were not convicted; but as some spirit of discontent was still manifest, Major-General Morgan was stationed with a detachment for the winter, in the disaffected region.

The paternal care with which Washington watched, at all times, over the welfare of the country, was manifested in a letter to General Hamilton, who had remained with the army. "Press the governors to be pointed in ordering the officers under their respective commands to march back with their respective corps; and to see that the inhabitants meet with no disgraceful insults or injuries from them."

It must have been a proud satisfaction to Washington to have put down, without an effusion of blood, an insurrection which, at one time, threatened such serious consequences. In a letter to Mr. Jay, who had recently gone minister to England, he writes: "The insurrection in the western counties of this State will be represented differently, according to the wishes of some and the prejudices of others, who may exhibit it as an evidence of what has been predicted, 'that we are unable to govern ourselves.' Under this view of the subject, I am happy in giving it to you as the general opinion, that this event, having happened at the time it did, was fortunate, although it will be attended with considerable expense."

After expressing his opinion that the "self-created societies" who were laboring to effect some revolution in the government, were the fomenters of these western disturbances, he adds: "It has afforded an occasion for the people of this country to show their abhorrence of the result and their attachment to the Constitution and the laws; for I believe that five times the number of militia that was required would have come forward, if it had been necessary, in support of them."

"The spirit which blazed out on this occasion, as soon as the object was fully understood and the lenient measures of the government were made known to the people, deserves to be communicated. There are instances of general officers going

at the head of a single troop, and of light companies ; of field-officers, when they came to the place of rendezvous, and found no command for them in that grade, turning into the ranks and proceeding as private soldiers, under their own captains ; and of numbers possessing the first fortunes in the country, standing in the ranks as private men, and marching day by day, with their knapsacks and haversacks at their backs, sleeping on straw with a single blanket in a soldier's tent, during the frosty nights which we have had, by way of example to others. Nay, more, many young Quakers, of the first families, character, and property, not discouraged by the elders, have turned into the ranks and marched with the troops.

“These things have terrified the insurgents, who had no conception that such a spirit prevailed ; but while the thunder only rumbled at a distance, were boasting of their strength and wishing for and threatening the militia by turns ; intimating that the arms they should take from them would soon become a magazine in their hands.”

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WASHINGTON'S DENUNCIATION OF SELF-CREATED SOCIETIES — NOT RELISHED BY CONGRESS — CAMPAIGN OF GENERAL WAYNE — HAMILTON REPORTS A PLAN FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE PUBLIC DEBT — AND RETIRES FROM HIS POST AS SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY — IS SUCCEEDED BY OLIVER WOLCOTT — RESIGNATION OF KNOX — SUCCEEDED BY TIMOTHY PICKERING — CLOSE OF THE SESSION.

IN his speech on the opening of Congress (November 19), Washington, in adverting to the insurrection in Western Pennsylvania, did not hesitate to denounce “certain self-created societies” as “fomenters of it.” After detailing its commencement and progress, he observes : “While there is cause to lament that occurrences of this nature should have disgraced the name or interrupted the tranquillity of any part of our community, or should have diverted to a new application any portion of the public resources, there are not wanting real and substantial consolations for the misfortune. It has demonstrated, that our prosperity rests on solid foundations ; by furnishing an additional proof that my fellow-citizens understand the true principles of government and liberty ; that they feel

their inseparable union ; that, notwithstanding all the devices which have been used to sway them from their interest and duty, they are now as ready to maintain the authority of the laws against licentious invasions, as they were to defend their rights against usurpation. It has been a spectacle, displaying to the highest advantage the value of republican government, to behold the most and least wealthy of our citizens standing in the same ranks as private soldiers ; pre-eminently distinguished by being the army of the Constitution ; undeterred by a march of three hundred miles over rugged mountains, by the approach of an inclement season, or by any other discouragement. Nor ought I to omit to acknowledge the efficacious and patriotic co-operation which I have experienced from the chief magistrates of the States to which my requisitions have been addressed.

“ To every description, indeed, of citizens, let praise be given ; but let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the Constitution of the United States. Let them cherish it, too, for the sake of those who, from every clime, are daily seeking a dwelling in our land. And when, in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who, careless of consequences, and disregarding the unerring truth, that those who arouse cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated from ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations of the whole government.”

This denunciation of the “ self-created societies ” was a bold step, by which he was sure to incur their resentment. It was not relished by some members of the Senate, but the majority gave it their approval. In the House, where the opposition party was most powerful, this passage of the President’s speech gave rise to much altercation, and finally, the majority showed their disapprobation by passing it over in silence in the address voted in reply.

The “ self-created societies,” however, which had sprung up in various parts of the Union, had received their death-blow ; they soon became odious in the public eye, and gradually disappeared ; following the fate of the Jacobin clubs in France.

It was with great satisfaction that Washington had been able to announce favorable intelligence of the campaign of General Wayne against the hostile Indians west of the Ohio. That brave commander had conducted it with a judgment and pru-

dence little compatible with the hare-brained appellation he had acquired by his rash exploits during the Revolution. Leaving his winter encampment on the Ohio, in the spring (of 1794), he had advanced cautiously into the wild country west of it; skirmishing with bands of lurking savages, as he advanced, and establishing posts to keep up communication and secure the transmission of supplies. It was not until the 8th of August that he arrived at the junction of the rivers Au Glaize and Miami, in a fertile and populous region, where the Western Indians had their most important villages. Here he threw up some works, which he named Fort Defiance. Being strengthened by eleven hundred mounted volunteers from Kentucky, his force exceeded that of the savage warriors who had collected to oppose him, which scarcely amounted to two thousand men. These, however, were strongly encamped in the vicinity of Fort Miami, a British post, about thirty miles distant, and far within the limits of the United States, and seemed prepared to give battle, expecting, possibly, to be aided by the British garrison. Wayne's men were eager for a fight, but he, remembering the instructions of government, restrained his fighting propensities. In a letter to his old comrade Knox, Secretary of War, he writes, "Though now prepared to strike, I have thought proper to make the enemy a last overture of peace, nor am I without hopes that they will listen to it."

His overture was ineffectual; or rather the reply he received was such as to leave him in doubt of the intentions of the enemy. He advanced, therefore, with the precautions he had hitherto observed, hoping to be met in the course of his march by deputies on peaceful missions.

On the 20th, being arrived near to the enemy's position, his advanced guard was fired upon by an ambush of the enemy concealed in a thicket, and was compelled to retreat. The general now ordered an attack of horse and foot upon the enemy's position; the Indians were roused from their lair with the point of the bayonet; driven, fighting for more than two miles, through thick woods, and pursued with great slaughter until within gunshot of the British fort. "We remained," writes the general, "three days and nights on the banks of the Miami, in front of the field of battle, during which time all the houses and corn were consumed, or otherwise destroyed, for a considerable distance both above and below Fort Miami; and we were within pistol-shot of the garrison of that place, who were compelled to remain quiet spectators of this general devastation and conflagration."

It was trusted that this decisive battle, and the wide ravages of villages and fields of corn with which it was succeeded, would bring the Indians to their senses, and compel them to solicit the peace which they had so repeatedly rejected.

In his official address to Congress, Washington had urged the adoption of some definite plan for the redemption of the public debt. A plan was reported by Mr. Hamilton, 20th January, 1795, which he had digested and prepared on the basis of the actual revenues, for the further support of public credit. The report embraced a comprehensive view of the system which he had pursued, and made some recommendations, which after much debate were adopted.

So closed Mr. Hamilton's labors as Secretary of the Treasury. He had long meditated a retirement from his post, the pay of which was inadequate to the support of his family, but had postponed it, first, on account of the accusations brought against him in the second Congress, and of which he awaited the investigation; secondly, in consequence of events which rendered the prospect of a continuance of peace precarious. But these reasons no longer operating, he gave notice, on his return from the Western country, that on the last day of the ensuing month of January he should give in his resignation. He did so, and received the following note from Washington on the subject: "After so long an experience of your public services, I am naturally led, at this moment of your departure from office (which it has always been my wish to prevent), to review them. In every relation which you have borne to me, I have found that my confidence in your talents, exertions, and integrity has been well placed. I the more freely render this testimony of my approbation, because I speak from opportunities of information which cannot deceive me, and which furnish satisfactory proof of your title to public regard.

"My most earnest wishes for your happiness will attend you in your retirement, and you may assure yourself of the sincere esteem, regard, and friendship, of, dear sir, your affectionate," etc.<sup>1</sup>

Hamilton's reply manifests his sense of the kindness of this letter. "As often as I may recall the vexations I have endured," writes he, "your approbation will be a great and precious consolation. It was not without a struggle that I yielded to the very urgent motives which impelled me to relinquish a station in which I could hope to be in any degree instrumental

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, xi. 16.

in promoting the success of an administration under your direction. . . . Whatever may be my destination hereafter, I entreat you to be persuaded (not the less from my having been sparing in professions) that I shall never cease to render a just tribute to those eminent and excellent qualities, which have been already productive of so many blessings to your country; that you will always have my fervent wishes for your public and personal felicity, and that it will be my pride to cultivate a continuance of that esteem, regard, and friendship, of which you do me the honor to assure me. With true respect and affectionate attachment, I have the honor to be," etc.<sup>1</sup>

Hamilton was succeeded in office by Oliver Wolcott of Connecticut, a man of judgment and ability, who had served as comptroller, and was familiar with the duties of the office.

Knox likewise had given in his resignation at the close of the month of December. "After having served my country nearly twenty years," writes he to Washington, "the greatest portion of which under your immediate auspices, it is with extreme reluctance that I find myself constrained to withdraw from so honorable a station. But the natural and powerful claims of a numerous family will no longer permit me to neglect their essential interests. In whatever situation I shall be, I shall recollect your confidence and kindness, with all the fervor and purity of affection of which a grateful heart is susceptible."

"I cannot suffer you," replies Washington, "to close your public service, without uniting with the satisfaction which must arise in your own mind from a conscious rectitude, my most perfect persuasion that you have deserved well of your country.

"My personal knowledge of your exertions, whilst it authorizes me to hold this language, justifies the sincere friendship which I have ever borne for you, and which will accompany you in every situation of life; being, with affectionate regard, always yours," etc.

There was always a kindly warmth in Washington's expressions towards the buoyant General Knox. Knox was succeeded in the War Department by Colonel Timothy Pickering, at that time Postmaster-General.

The session of Congress closed on the 3d of March, 1795.

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, xi. 19.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

WASHINGTON'S ANXIETY ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE NEGOTIATION WITH ENGLAND — JAY'S TREATY ARRIVES FOR RATIFICATION — PREDISPOSITION TO CONDEMN — RETURN OF JAY — ADET SUCCEEDS FAUCHET AS MINISTER FROM FRANCE — THE TREATY LAID BEFORE THE SENATE — RATIFIED WITH A QUALIFICATION — A NOVEL QUESTION — POPULAR DISCONTENT — ABSTRACT OF THE TREATY PUBLISHED — VIOLENT OPPOSITION TO IT — WASHINGTON RESOLVED TO RATIFY — HIS RESOLUTION SUSPENDED — GOES TO MOUNT VERNON — REPLY TO AN ADDRESS FROM BOSTON — INCREASING CLAMOR.

WASHINGTON had watched the progress of the mission of Mr. Jay to England, with an anxious eye. He was aware that he had exposed his popularity to imminent hazard, by making an advance toward a negotiation with that power; but what was of still greater moment with him, he was aware that the peace and happiness of his country were at stake on the result of that mission. It was, moreover, a mission of great delicacy, from the many intricate and difficult points to be discussed, and the various and mutual grounds of complaint to be adjusted.

Mr. Jay, in a letter dated August 5, 1794, had informed him confidentially, that the ministry were prepared to settle the matters in dispute upon just and liberal terms; still, what those terms, which they conceived to be just and liberal, might prove when they came to be closely discussed, no one could prognosticate.

Washington hardly permitted himself to hope for the complete success of the mission. To "give and take," he presumed would be the result. In the mean time there were so many hot heads and impetuous spirits at home to be managed and restrained, that he was anxious the negotiation might assume a decisive form and be brought to a speedy close. He was perplexed too, by what, under existing circumstances, appeared piratical conduct, on the part of Bermudian privateers persisting in capturing American vessels.

At length, on the 7th of March, 1795, four days after the close of the session of Congress, a treaty arrived which had been negotiated by Mr. Jay, and signed by the ministers of the two nations on the 19th of November, and was sent out for ratification.

In a letter to Washington, which accompanied the treaty, Mr. Jay wrote: "To do more was impossible. I ought not to conceal from you that the confidence reposed in your personal character was visible and useful throughout the negotiation."

Washington immediately made the treaty a close study; some of the provisions were perfectly satisfactory; of others, he did not approve; on the whole, he considered it a matter, to use his own expression, of "give and take," and believing the advantages to outweigh the objections, and that, as Mr. Jay alleged, it was the best treaty attainable, he made up his mind to ratify it, should it be approved by the Senate.

As a system of predetermined hostility to the treaty, however, was already manifested, and efforts were made to awaken popular jealousy concerning it, Washington kept its provisions secret, that the public mind might not be preoccupied on the subject. In the course of a few days, however, enough leaked out to be seized upon by the opposition press to excite public distrust, though not enough to convey a distinct idea of the merits of the instrument. In fact, the people were predisposed to condemn, because vexed that any overtures had been made towards a negotiation, such overtures having been stigmatized as cowardly and degrading. If it had been necessary to send a minister to England, said they, it should have been to make a downright demand of reparation for wrongs inflicted on our commerce, and the immediate surrender of the Western posts.

In the mean time Jay arrived on the 28th of May, and found that during his absence in Europe he had been elected governor of the State of New York; an honorable election, the result of no effort nor intrigue, but of the public sense entertained by his native State, of his pure and exalted merit. He, in consequence, resigned the office of Chief Justice of the United States.

In the course of this month arrived Mr. Adet, who had been appointed by the French government to succeed Mr. Fauchet as minister to the United States. He brought with him the colors of France which the convention had instructed him to present as a testimonial of friendship, in return for the American flag which had been presented by Mr. Monroe. The presentation of the colors was postponed by him for the present.

The Senate was convened by Washington on the 8th of June, and the treaty of Mr. Jay was laid before it, with its accompanying documents. The session was with closed doors, discussions were long and arduous, and the treaty underwent a scrutinizing examination. The twelfth article met with especial objections.

This article provided for a direct trade between the United States and the British West India Islands, in American vessels not exceeding seventy tons burden, conveying the produce of the States or of the Islands; but it prohibited the exportation of molasses, sugar, coffee, cocoa, or cotton, in American vessels, either from the United States or the Islands, to any part of the world. Under this article it was a restricted intercourse, but Mr. Jay considered the admission even of small vessels, to the trade of these Islands, an important advantage to the commerce of the United States. He had not sufficiently adverted to the fact that, among the prohibited articles, cotton was also a product of the Southern States. Its cultivation had been but recently introduced there; so that when he sailed for Europe hardly sufficient had been raised for domestic consumption, and at the time of signing the treaty very little, if any, had been exported. Still it was now becoming an important staple of the South, and hence the objection of the Senate to this article of the treaty. On the 24th of June two-thirds of the Senate, the constitutional majority, voted for the ratification of the treaty, stipulating, however, that an article be added suspending so much of the twelfth article as respected the West India trade, and that the President be requested to open, without delay, further negotiation on this head.

Here was a novel case to be determined. Could the Senate be considered to have ratified the treaty before the insertion of this new article? Was the act complete and final, so as to render it unnecessary to refer it back to that body? Could the President put his final seal upon an act before it was complete? After much reflection, Washington was satisfied of the propriety of ratifying the treaty with the qualification imposed by the Senate.

In the mean time the popular discontent which had been excited concerning the treaty was daily increasing. The secrecy which had been maintained with regard to its provisions was wrested into a cause of offence. Republics should have no secrets. The Senate should not have deliberated on the treaty with closed doors.

Such was the irritable condition of the public mind when, on the 29th of June, a senator of the United States (Mr. Mason of Virginia) sent an abstract of the treaty to be published in a leading opposition paper in Philadelphia.

The whole country was immediately in a blaze. Beside the opposition party, a portion of the Cabinet was against the ratification. Of course it received but a faltering support,

while the attack upon it was vehement and sustained. The assailants seemed determined to carry their point by storm. Meetings to oppose the ratification were held in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charleston. The smaller towns throughout the Union followed their example. In New York, a copy of the treaty was burned before the governor's house. In Philadelphia, it was suspended on a pole, carried about the streets, and finally burnt in front of the British minister's house, amid the shoutings of the populace. The whole country seemed determined, by prompt and clamorous manifestations of dissatisfaction, to make Washington give way.

He saw their purpose; he was aware of the odious points of view on which the treaty might justly be placed; his own opinion was not particularly favorable to it; but he was convinced that it was better to ratify it, in the manner the Senate had advised, and with the reservation already mentioned, than to suffer matters to remain in their present unsettled and precarious state.

Before he could act upon this conviction a new difficulty arose to suspend his resolution. News came that the order of the British government of the 8th of June, 1793, for the seizure of provisions in vessels going to French ports, was renewed. Washington instantly directed that a strong memorial should be drawn up against this order; as it seemed to favor a construction of the treaty which he was determined to resist. While this memorial was in course of preparation, he was called off to Mount Vernon. On his way thither, though little was said to him on the subject of the treaty, he found, he says, from indirect discourses, that endeavors were making to place it in all the odious points of view of which it was susceptible, and in some which it would not admit.

The proceedings and resolves of town meetings, also, savoring as he thought of party prejudice, were forwarded to him by express, and added to his disquiet. "Party disputes are now carried to such a length," writes he, "and truth is so enveloped in mist and false representation that it is extremely difficult to know through what channel to seek it. This difficulty, to one who is of no party, and whose sole wish is to pursue with undeviating steps a path, which would lead this country to respectability, wealth, and happiness, is exceedingly to be lamented. But such, for wise purposes it is presumed, is the turbulence of human passions in party disputes, when victory more than *truth* is the palm contended for, that 'the post of honor is a *private station*.'" <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, xi. 40.

The opposition made to the treaty from meetings in different parts of the Union, gave him the most serious uneasiness, from the effect it might have on the relations with France and England. His reply (July 28) to an address from the selectmen of Boston, contains the spirit of his replies to other addresses of the kind, and shows the principles which influenced him in regard to the treaty:

"In every act of my administration," said he, "I have sought the happiness of my fellow-citizens. My system for the attainment of this object has uniformly been to overlook all personal, local, and partial considerations; to contemplate the United States as one great whole; to confide that sudden impressions, when erroneous, would yield to candid reflection; and to consult only the substantial and permanent interests of our country.

"Nor have I departed from this line of conduct, on the occasion which has produced the resolutions contained in your letter.

"Without a predilection for my own judgment I have weighed with attention every argument which has at any time been brought into view. But the Constitution is the guide which I never can abandon. It has assigned to the President the power of making treaties with the advice and consent of the Senate. It was, doubtless, supposed that these two branches of government would combine, without passion, and with the best means of information, those facts and principles upon which the success of our foreign relations will always depend; that they ought not to substitute for their own conviction, the opinions of others, or to seek truth through any channel but that of a temperate and well-informed investigation.

"Under this persuasion, I have resolved on the manner of executing the duty before me. To the high responsibility of it, I freely submit, and you, gentlemen, are at liberty to make these sentiments known as the grounds of my procedure. While I feel the most lively gratitude for the many instances of approbation from my country, I can no otherwise deserve it, than by obeying the dictates of my conscience."<sup>1</sup>

The violence of the opposition increased. Washington perceived that the prejudices against the treaty were more extensive than was generally imagined. "How should it be otherwise," said he, "when no stone has been left unturned that could impress on the minds of the people the most arrant misrepresentation of facts; that their rights have not only

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<sup>1</sup> Writings. Sparks, xi. 2.

been neglected but absolutely sold; that there are no reciprocal advantages in the treaty; that the benefits are all on the side of Great Britain; and what seems to have more weight with them than all the rest, and to have been most pressed, that the treaty is made with the design to oppress the French, in open violation of our treaty with that nation; and contrary, too, to every principle of gratitude and sound policy."

Never, during his administration, had he seen a crisis, in his judgment, so pregnant with interesting events, nor one from which, whether viewed on one side or the other, more was to be apprehended.

If the treaty were ratified, the partisans of the French, "or rather," said he, "of war and confusion" would excite them to hostility; if not ratified, there was no foreseeing the consequences as it respected Great Britain. It was a crisis, he said, that most eminently called upon the administration to be wise and temperate, as well as firm. The public clamor continued, and induced a reiterated examination of the subject; but did not shake his purpose. "*There is but one straight course,*" said he, "*and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily.*"<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XL.

WASHINGTON RECALLED TO THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT — CONDUCT OF RANDOLPH BROUGHT IN QUESTION — TREATY SIGNED — RESIGNATION OF RANDOLPH — HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH WASHINGTON — UNLIMITED DISCLOSURE PERMITTED — APPEARANCE OF HIS VINDICATION — PICKERING TRANSFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE — M'HENRY APPOINTED SECRETARY OF WAR — ARRIVAL OF GEORGE WASHINGTON LAFAYETTE.

THE difficult and intricate questions pressing upon the attention of government left Washington little mood to enjoy the retirement of Mount Vernon, being constantly in doubt whether his presence in Philadelphia were not necessary. In his letters to Randolph, he requested to be kept continually advised on this head. "While I am in office I shall never suffer private convenience to interfere with what I conceive to be my official duty." "I do not require more than a day's notice to repair to the seat of government."

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<sup>1</sup> See Letter to Edmund Randolph. Writings, xl. pp. 45-51.

## LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

His promptness was soon put to the test. Early in August came a mysterious letter, dated July 31, from Mr. Pickering, the secretary of war.

"On the subject of the treaty," writes Pickering, "I confess I feel extreme solicitude, and for a *special reason* which can be communicated to you only in person. I entreat, therefore, that you will return with all convenient speed to the seat of government. In the mean while, for the reason above referred to, I pray you to decide on no important political measure, in whatever form it may be presented to you. Mr. Wolcott and I (Mr. Bradford concurring) waited on Mr. Randolph, and urged his writing to request your return. He wrote in our presence, but we concluded a letter from one of us also expedient. With the utmost sincerity I subscribe myself yours and my country's friend. This letter is for your own eye alone."

The receipt of this enigmatical letter induced Washington to cut short his sojourn at Mount Vernon, and hasten to Philadelphia. He arrived there on the 11th of August; and on the same day received a solution of the mystery. A despatch written by Fauchet, the French minister, to his government in the preceding month of November, was placed in Washington's hands with a translation of it made by Mr. Pickering. The despatch had been found on board of a French privateer, captured by a British frigate, and had been transmitted to the ministry. Lord Grenville, finding it contained passages relating to the intercourse of Mr. Randolph, the American Secretary of State, with Mr. Fauchet, had sent it to Mr. Hammond, the British minister in Philadelphia. He had put it into the hands of Mr. Wolcott, the Secretary of the Treasury, who had shown it to the Secretary of War and Attorney-General; and the contents had been considered so extraordinary as to call forth the mysterious letter entreating the prompt return of Washington.

The following passages in Fauchet's intercepted despatch related to the Western insurrection and the proclamation of Washington:

"Two or three days before the proclamation was published, and of course before the cabinet had resolved on its measures, the Secretary of State came to my house. All his countenance was grief. He requested of me a private conversation. It was all over, he said to me; a civil war is about to ravage our unhappy country. Four men, by their talents, their influence, and their energy, may save it. But, debtors of English merchants, they will be deprived of their liberty, if they take the smallest step. Could you lend them instantaneously funds to

shelter them from English prosecution? This inquiry astonished me much. It was impossible for me to make a satisfactory answer. You know my want of power and deficiency in pecuniary means." . . . "Thus, with some thousands of dollars, the Republic could have decided on civil war or peace. *Thus the consciences of the pretended patriots of America have already their price.*" — "What will be the old age of this government, if it is thus already decrepit?"

The perusal of the letter gave Washington deep perplexity and concern. He revolved the matter in his mind in silence.

The predominant object of his thoughts recently had been to put a stop to the public agitation on the subject of the treaty; and he postponed any new question of difficulty until decided measures had laid the other at rest. On the next day, therefore (12th), he brought before the cabinet the question of immediate ratification. All the members were in favor of it excepting Mr. Randolph; he had favored it before the news of the British provision order, but now pronounced it unadvisable, until that order were revoked, and there should be an end of the war between France and England. This led to further discussion, and it was finally agreed to ratify the treaty immediately; but to accompany the ratification with a strong memorial against the provision order. The ratification was signed by Washington on the 18th of August.

His conduct towards Randolph, in the interim, had been as usual, but now that the despatch of public business no longer demanded the entire attention of the cabinet, he proceeded to clear up the doubts occasioned by the intercepted despatch. Accordingly, on the following day, as Randolph entered the cabinet, Washington, who was conversing with Pickering and Wolcott, rose and handed to him the letter of Fauchet, asking an explanation of the questionable parts.

Randolph appears to have been less agitated by the production of the letter, than hurt that the inquiry concerning it had not first been made of him in private. He postponed making any specific reply, until he should have time to examine the letter at his leisure; and observed on retiring, that, after the treatment he had experienced, he could not think of remaining in office a moment longer.

In a letter to the President the same day he writes: "Your confidence in me, sir, has been unlimited, and I can truly affirm unabused. My sensations, then, cannot be concealed, when I find that confidence so suddenly withdrawn, without a word or distant hint being previously dropped to me. This, sir, as I



mentioned in your room, is a situation in which I cannot hold my present office, and therefore I hereby resign it.

"It will not, however, be concluded from hence that I mean to relinquish the inquiry. No, sir; very far from it. I will also meet any inquiry; and to prepare for it, if I learn there is a chance of overtaking Mr. Fauchet before he sails, I will go to him immediately.

"I have to beg the favor of you to permit me to be furnished with a copy of the letter, and I will prepare an answer to it; which I perceive that I cannot do as I wish, merely upon the few hasty memoranda which I took with my pencil.

"I am satisfied, sir, that you will acknowledge one piece of justice to be due on the occasion: which is, that, until an inquiry can be made, the affair shall continue in secrecy under your injunction. For, after pledging myself for a more specific investigation of all the suggestions, I here most solemnly deny that any overture came from me, which was to produce money to me or any others for me; and that in any manner, directly or indirectly, was a shilling ever received by me; nor was it ever contemplated by me, that one shilling should be applied by Mr. Fauchet to any purpose relative to the insurrection."

Washington, in a reply on the following day, in which he accepted his resignation, observes: "Whilst you are in pursuit of means to remove the strong suspicions arising from this letter, no disclosure of its contents will be made by me; and I will enjoin the same on the public officers who are acquainted with the purport of it, unless something will appear to render an explanation necessary on the part of the government, and of which I will be the judge."

And on a subsequent occasion he writes: "No man would rejoice more than I to find that the suspicions which have resulted from the intercepted letter were unequivocally and honorably removed."

Mr. Fauchet, in the mean time, having learnt previous to embarkation, that his despatch had been intercepted, wrote a declaration, denying that Mr. Randolph had ever indicated a willingness to receive money for personal objects, and affirming that he had had no intention to say any thing in his letter to his government, to the disadvantage of Mr. Randolph's character.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Randolph now set to work to prepare a pamphlet in explanation of his conduct, intimating to his friends, that in the

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks' Writings of Washington, xi. 90.

course of his vindication, he would bring things to view which would affect Washington more than any thing which had yet appeared.<sup>1</sup>

While thus occupied he addressed several notes to Washington, requiring information on various points, and received concise answers to all his queries.

On the occasion, where he had required a particular paper, he published in the Gazette an extract from his note to Washington; as if fearing the request might be denied, lest the paper in question should lay open many confidential and delicate matters.

In reply, Washington writes: "That you may have no cause to complain of the withholding of any paper, however private and confidential, which you shall think necessary in a case of so serious a nature, I have directed that you should have the inspection of my letter of the 22d of July, agreeably to your request, and you are at full liberty to publish, without reserve, *any* and *every* private and confidential letter I ever wrote to you; nay, more, every word I ever uttered to you or in your hearing, from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication. I grant this permission, inasmuch as the extract alluded to manifestly tends to impress on the public an opinion, that something was passed between us which you should, disclose with reluctance, from motives of delicacy with respect to me. . . . That public will judge, when it comes to see your vindication, how far and how proper it has been for you to publish private and confidential communications which oftentimes have been written in a hurry, and sometimes without even copies being taken; and it will, I hope, appreciate my motives, even if it should condemn my prudence, in allowing you the unlimited license herein contained."

The merit of this unlimited license will be properly understood when it is known that, at this time, Washington was becoming more and more the object of the malignant attacks of the press. The ratification of the treaty had opened the vials of party wrath against him. "His military and political character," we are told, "was attacked with equal violence, and it was averred that he was totally destitute of merit, either as a soldier or a statesman. He was charged with having violated the Constitution, in negotiating a treaty without the previous advice of the Senate, that he had embraced within that treaty subjects belonging exclusively to the legislature, for which an

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, xi. 39.

impeachment was publicly suggested. Nay more, it was asserted that he had drawn from the treasury, for his private use, more than the salary annexed to his office."<sup>1</sup>

This last charge, so incompatible with the whole character and conduct of Washington, was fully refuted by the late Secretary of the Treasury, who explained that the President never himself touched any part of the compensation attached to his office, but that the whole was received and disbursed by the gentleman who superintended the expenses of his household. That the expenses at some times exceeded, and at other times fell short of the quarter's allowance; but that the aggregate fell within the allowance for the year.

At this time the General Assembly of Maryland made a unanimous resolution to the following effect: that "observing with deep concern, a series of efforts, by indirect insinuation or open invective, to detach from the first magistrate of the Union, the well-earned confidence of his fellow-citizens; they think it their duty to declare, and they do hereby declare their unabated reliance on the *integrity, judgment, and patriotism* of the President of the United States."

In a reply to the Governor of Maryland, Washington observed: "At any time the expression of such a sentiment would have been considered as highly honorable and flattering. At the present, when the voice of malignancy is so high-toned, and no attempts are left unessayed to destroy all confidence in the constituted authorities of this country, it is peculiarly grateful to my sensibility. . . .

"I have long since resolved, for the present time at least, to let my calumniators proceed without any notice being taken of their invectives by myself, or by any others with my participation or knowledge. Their views, I dare say, are readily perceived by all the enlightened and well-disposed part of the community; and by the records of my administration, and not by the voice of faction, I expect to be acquitted or condemned hereafter."

The vindication which Mr. Randolph had been preparing, appeared in December. In this, he gave a narrative of the principal events relating to the case, his correspondence with the President, and the whole of the French minister's letter. He endeavored to explain those parts of the letter which had brought the purity of his conduct in question; but, as has been observed, "he had a difficult task to perform, as he was obliged

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<sup>1</sup> See Marshall's Washington, vol. ii. p. 370.

to prove a negative, and to explain vague expressions and insinuations connected with his name in Fauchet's letter."<sup>1</sup>

Fauchet himself furnished the best vindication in his certificate above mentioned; but it is difficult to reconcile his certificate with the language of his official letter to his government. We are rather inclined to attribute to misconceptions and hasty inferences of the French minister, the construction put by him in his letter on the conversation he had held with Mr. Randolph.

The latter injured his cause by the imbittered feelings manifested in his vindication, and the asperity with which he spoke of Washington there and elsewhere. He deeply regretted it in after life, and in a letter to the Hon. Bushrod Washington, written in 1810, he says: "I do not retain the smallest degree of that feeling which roused me fifteen years ago, against some individuals. . . . If I could now present myself before your venerated uncle, it would be my pride to confess my contrition, that I suffered my irritation, let the cause be what it might, to use some of those expressions respecting him, which, at this moment of indifference to the ideas of the world, I wish to recall, as being inconsistent with my subsequent conviction. My life, will, I hope, be sufficiently extended for the recording of my sincere opinion of his virtues and merit, in a style which is not the result of a mind merely debilitated by misfortune, but of that Christian philosophy on which alone I depend for inward tranquillity."<sup>2</sup>

After a considerable interval from the resignation of Randolph, Colonel Pickering was transferred to the Department of State, and Mr. James McHenry was appointed Secretary of War. The office of Attorney-General becoming vacant by the death of Mr. Bradford, was offered to Mr. Charles Lee of Virginia, and accepted by him on the last day of November.

During the late agitations, George Washington Lafayette, the son of the general, had arrived at Boston under the name of Motier, accompanied by his tutor, M. Frestel, and had written to Washington apprising him of his arrival. It was an embarrassing moment to Washington. The letter excited his deepest sensibility, bringing with it recollections of Lafayette's merits, services, and sufferings, and of their past friendship, and he resolved to become "father, friend, protector, and supporter" to his son. But he must proceed with caution; on account of his own official character as Executive of the United

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<sup>1</sup> Note of Mr. Sparks. Washington's Writings, xi. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall's Life of Washington, 2d edition, vol. II. note xx.

States, and of the position of Lafayette in regard to the French government. Caution, also, was necessary, not to endanger the situation of the young man himself, and of his mother and friends whom he had left behind. Philadelphia would not be an advisable residence for him at present, until it was seen what opinions would be excited by his arrival; as Washington would for some time be absent from the seat of government, while all the foreign functionaries were residing there, particularly those of his own nation. Washington suggested, therefore, that he should enter for the present as a student at the University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and engaged to pay all the expenses for the residence there of himself and his tutor. These and other suggestions were made in a private and confidential letter to Mr. George Cabot of Boston, Senator of the United States, whose kind services he enlisted in the matter.

It was subsequently thought best that young Lafayette should proceed to New York, and remain in retirement, at the country house of a friend in its vicinity, pursuing his studies with his tutor, until Washington should direct otherwise.

## CHAPTER XLI.

MEETING OF CONGRESS — WASHINGTON'S OFFICIAL SUMMARY OF THE EVENTS OF THE YEAR — CORDIAL RESPONSE OF THE SENATE — PARTIAL DEMUR OF THE HOUSE — WASHINGTON'S POSITION AND FEELINGS WITH REGARD TO ENGLAND, AS SHOWN BY HIMSELF — MR. ADET PRESENTS THE COLORS OF FRANCE — THE TREATY RETURNED — PROCEEDINGS THEREUPON — THOMAS PINCKNEY RESIGNS AS MINISTER AT LONDON — RUFUS KING APPOINTED IN HIS PLACE — WASHINGTON'S VIEW OF THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN — JEFFERSON'S FEARS OF AN ATTEMPT TO SOW DISSENSION BETWEEN HIM AND WASHINGTON — MR. MONROE RECALLED AND C. C. PINCKNEY APPOINTED IN HIS STEAD — RESENTFUL POLICY OF FRANCE.

In his speech at the opening of the session of Congress in December, Washington presented a cheerful summary of the events of the year. "I trust I do not deceive myself," said he, "while I indulge the persuasion, that I have never met you at any period when, more than at present, the situation of our public affairs has afforded just cause for mutual congratulation,

and for inviting you to join with me in profound gratitude to the Author of all good, for the numerous and extraordinary blessings we enjoy."

And first he announced that a treaty had been concluded provisionally, by General Wayne, with the Indians north-west of the Ohio, by which the termination of the long, expensive, and distressing war with those tribes was placed at the option of the United States. "In the adjustment of the terms," said he, "the satisfaction of the Indians was deemed an object worthy no less of the policy than of the liberality of the United States, as the necessary basis of durable tranquillity. This object, it is believed, has been fully attained. The articles agreed upon will immediately be laid before the Senate, for their consideration."<sup>1</sup>

A letter from the Emperor of Morocco, recognizing a treaty which had been made with his deceased father, insured the continuance of peace with that power.

The terms of a treaty with the Dey and Regency of Algiers had been adjusted in a manner to authorize the expectation of a speedy peace in that quarter, and the liberation of a number of American citizens from a long and grievous captivity.

A speedy and satisfactory conclusion was anticipated of a negotiation with the court of Madrid, "which would lay the foundation of lasting harmony with a power whose friendship," said Washington, "we have uniformly and sincerely desired to cherish."

Adverting to the treaty with Great Britain and its conditional ratification, the result on the part of his Britannic Majesty was yet unknown, but when ascertained, would immediately be placed before Congress.

"In regard to internal affairs, every part of the Union gave indications of rapid and various improvement. With burthens so light as scarcely to be perceived; with resources fully adequate to present exigencies; with governments founded on the genuine principles of rational liberty; and with mild and wholesome laws, was it too much to say that our country exhibited a spectacle of national happiness never surpassed, if ever before equalled?"

In regard to the late insurrection: "The misled," observes he, "have abandoned their errors, and pay the respect to our Con-

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<sup>1</sup> These preliminary articles were confirmed by a definitive treaty concluded on the 7th of August. Wayne received high testimonials of approbation both from Congress and the President, and made a kind of triumphal entry into Philadelphia amid the enthusiastic acclamation of the people.

stitution and laws which is due from good citizens to the public authorities. These circumstances have induced me to pardon generally the offenders here referred to, and to extend forgiveness to those who had been adjudged to capital punishment. ”

After recommending several objects to the attention of both Houses, he concludes by advising temperate discussion and mutual forbearance wherever there was a difference of opinion ; advice sage and salutary on all occasions, but particularly called for by the excited temper of the times.

There was, as usual, a cordial answer from the Senate ; but in the present House of Representatives, as in the last one, the opposition were in the majority. In the response reported by a committee, one clause expressing undiminished confidence in the chief magistrate was demurred to ; some members affirmed, that, with them, it had been considerably diminished by a late transaction. After a warm altercation, to avoid a direct vote, the response was recommitted, and the clause objected to modified. The following is the form adopted : “ In contemplating that spectacle of national happiness which our country exhibits, and of which you, sir, have been pleased to make an interesting summary, permit us to acknowledge and declare the very great share which your zealous and faithful services have contributed to it, and to express the affectionate attachment which we feel for your character. ”

The feelings and position of Washington with regard to England at this juncture, may be judged from a letter dated December 22, to Gouverneur Morris, then in London, and who was in occasional communication with Lord Grenville. Washington gives a detail of the various causes of complaint against the British government which were rankling in the minds of the American people, and which Morris was to mention, unofficially, should he converse with Lord Grenville on the subject. “ I give you these details,” writes he, “ as evidences of the impolitic conduct of the British government towards these United States ; that it may be seen how difficult it has been for the Executive, under such an accumulation of irritating circumstances, to maintain the ground of neutrality which had been taken ; and at a time when the remembrance of the aid we had received from France in the Revolution was fresh in every mind, and while the partisans of that country were continually contrasting the affection of *that* people with the unfriendly disposition of the *British government*. And that, too, while *their own* sufferings, during the war with the latter, had not been forgotten.

“It is well known that peace has been (to borrow a modern phrase) the order of the day with me, since the disturbances in Europe first commenced. My policy has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honor to remain in the administration, to maintain friendly terms with, but be independent of, all the nations of the earth; to share in the broils of none; to fulfil our own engagements; to supply the wants and be carriers for them all. . . . Nothing short of self-respect, and that justice which is essential to a national character, ought to involve us in war. . . .

“By a firm adherence to these principles, and to the neutral policy which has been adopted, I have brought on myself a torrent of abuse in the factious papers of this country, and from the enmity of the discontented of all descriptions. But having no sinister objects in view, I shall not be diverted from my course by these, nor any attempts which are, or shall be, made to withdraw the confidence of my constituents from me. I have nothing to ask; and, discharging my duty, I have nothing to fear from invective. The acts of my administration will appear when I am no more, and the intelligent and candid part of mankind will not condemn my conduct without recurring to them.”

The first day of January, being “a day of general joy and congratulation,” had been appointed by Washington to receive the colors of France, sent out by the Committee of Safety. On that day they were presented by Mr. Adet, with an address, representing, in glowing language, the position of France, “struggling not only for her own liberty, but for that of the race. Assimilated to or rather identified with free people by the form of her government, she saw in them only friends and brothers. Long accustomed to regard the American people as her most faithful allies, she sought to draw closer the ties already formed in the fields of America, under the auspices of victory, over the ruins of tyranny.”

Washington received the colors with lively sensibility and a brief reply, expressive of the deep solicitude and high admiration produced by the events of the French struggle, and his joy that the interesting revolutionary movements of so many years had issued in the formation of a constitution designed to give permanency to the great object contended for.

In February the treaty with Great Britain, as modified by the advice of the Senate, came back ratified by the king of Great Britain, and on the last of the month a proclamation was issued by the President, declaring it to be the supreme law of the land. The opposition in the House of Representatives were offended



that Washington should issue this proclamation before the sense of that body had been taken on the subject, and denied the power of the President and Senate to complete a treaty without its sanction. They were bent on defeating it by refusing to pass the laws necessary to carry it into effect; and, as a preliminary, passed a resolution requesting the President to lay before the House the instruction to Mr. Jay, and the correspondence and other documents relative to the treaty.

Washington, believing that these papers could not be constitutionally demanded, resolved, he said, from the first moment, and from the fullest conviction of his mind, to *resist the principle*, which was evidently intended to be established by the call of the House; he only deliberated on the manner in which this could be done with the least bad consequences.

After mature deliberation and with the assistance of the heads of departments and the Attorney-General, he prepared and sent in to the House an answer to their request. In this he dwelt upon the necessity of caution and secrecy in foreign negotiations, as one cogent reason for vesting the power of making treaties in the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, the principle on which that body was formed, confining it to a small number of members.

To admit a right in the House of Representatives to demand and have all the papers respecting a foreign negotiation would, he observed, be to establish a dangerous precedent.

"It did not occur to him," he added, "that the inspection of the papers called for, could be relative to any purpose under the cognizance of the House of Representatives, except that of an impeachment, which the resolution had not expressed. He had no disposition to withhold any information which the duty of his station would permit, or the public good should require to be disclosed; and, in fact, all the papers affecting the negotiation with Great Britain had been laid before the Senate, when the treaty itself had been communicated for their consideration and advice."

After various further remarks, he concludes: "As, therefore, it is perfectly clear to my understanding that the assent of the House of Representatives is not necessary to the validity of a treaty; as the treaty with Great Britain exhibits itself in all the objects requiring legislative provisions; and on these, the papers called for can throw no light; and as it is essential to the due administration of the government, that the boundaries fixed by the Constitution between the different departments, should be observed, a just regard to the Constitution and to the

duty of my office, under all the circumstances of this case, forbid a compliance with your request."

A resolution to make provision for carrying the treaty into effect, gave rise to an animated and protracted debate. Meanwhile, the whole country became agitated on the subject; meetings were held throughout the United States, and it soon became apparent that the popular feeling was with the minority in the House of Representatives, who favored the making of the necessary appropriations. The public will prevailed, and, on the last day of April, the resolution was passed, though by a close vote of fifty-one to forty-eight.

For some months past, Mr. Thomas Pinckney had been solicitous to be relieved from his post of Minister Plenipotentiary at London, but the doubtful issue of the above dispute, and the difficulty of finding a fit substitute for him, had caused delay in the matter; for, as Mr. Hamilton observed: "The importance, to our security and commerce, of a good understanding with Great Britain, rendered it very important that a man able and not disagreeable to that government, should be there." Such a man at length presented in Mr. Rufus King, of New York. He had vindicated the treaty with his pen in part of a series of papers signed Camillus; he had defended it by his manly and brilliant eloquence in the Senate; he was now about to quit his seat in that body. Hamilton, who knew him well, struck off his character admirably in a letter to the President. "Mr. King," writes he, "is a remarkably well-informed man, a very judicious one, a man of address. a man of fortune and economy, whose situation affords just ground of confidence; a man of unimpeachable probity where he is known, a firm friend of the government, a supporter of the measures of the President; a man who cannot but feel that he has strong pretensions to confidence and trust."

Mr. King was nominated to the Senate on the 19th of May, and his nomination was confirmed. On the 1st of June this session of Congress terminated.

On the 12th of that month Washington, in a letter to Colonel Humphrey, then in Portugal, speaks of the recent political campaign: "The gazettes will give you a pretty good idea of the state of politics and parties in this country, and will show you, at the same time, if Bache's Aurora is among them, in what manner I am attacked for persevering steadily in measures which, to me, appear necessary to preserve us, during the conflicts of belligerent powers, in a state of tranquillity. But these attacks, unjust and unpleasant as they are, will occasion

no change in my conduct, nor will they produce any other effect in my mind than to increase the solicitude which long since has taken fast hold of my heart, to enjoy, in the shades of retirement, the consolation of believing that I have rendered to my country every service to which my abilities were competent — not from pecuniary or ambitious motives, nor from a desire to provide for any men, further than their intrinsic merit entitled them, and surely not with a view of bringing my own relations into office. Maliguity, therefore, may dart its shafts, but no earthly power can deprive me of the satisfaction of knowing that I have not, in the whole course of my administration, committed an intentional error."

On the same day (June 12) Jefferson, writing from his retirement at Monticello, to Mr. Monroe in Paris, showed himself sensitive to the influence of Washington's great popularity in countervailing party schemes. "Congress have risen," writes he. "You will have seen by their proceedings the truth of what I always observed to you, that one man outweighs them all in the influence over the people, who have supported his judgment against their own and that of their representatives. Republicanism must lie on its oars, resign the vessel to its pilot, and themselves to what course he thinks best for them."

In Bache's *Aurora* of June 9, an anonymous article had appeared, disclosing queries propounded by Washington, in strict confidence, to the members of the cabinet in 1793, as to the conduct to be observed in reference to England and France. As soon as Jefferson saw this article he wrote to Washington (June 19), disclaiming his having had any concern in that breach of official trust. "I have formerly mentioned to you," observes he, "that from a very early period of my life, I had laid it down as a rule of conduct never to write a word for the public papers. From this I have never departed in a single instance."

Jefferson further intimates a suspicion that a third party had been endeavoring to sow tares between him and Washington, by representing him (Jefferson) as still engaged in the bustle of politics, and in turbulence and intrigue against the government.

This drew forth a noble reply from Washington. "If I had entertained any suspicious before," writes he, "that the queries, which have been published in Bache's paper, proceeded from you, the assurances you have given me of the contrary, would have removed them; but the truth is, I harbored none.

"As you have mentioned the subject yourself, it would not

be frank, candid, or friendly to conceal that your conduct has been represented as derogating from that opinion I had conceived you entertained of me; that to your particular friends and connections you have described, and they have denounced me as a person under a dangerous influence; and that, if I would listen more to some other opinions, all would be well. My answer invariably has been, that I had never discovered any thing in the conduct of Mr. Jefferson to raise suspicions in my mind of his insincerity; that, if he would retrace my public conduct while he was in the administration, abundant proofs would occur to him, that truth and right decisions were the sole object of my pursuit; that there were as many instances within his own knowledge of my having decided *against* as in *favor* of the opinions of the person evidently alluded to; and, moreover, that I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics or measures of any man living. In short, that I was no party man myself, and the first wish of my heart was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them.

“To this I may add, and very truly, that, until within the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would or even could, go the length I have been witness to; nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that, while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth, and wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and, to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side only of a subject. and that, too, in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket. But enough of this; I have already gone further in the expression of my feelings than I intended.”

Shortly after the recess of Congress another change was made in the foreign diplomacy. Mr. Monroe, when sent envoy to France, had been especially instructed to explain the views and conduct of the United States in forming the treaty with England; and had been amply furnished with documents for the purpose. From his own letters, however, it appeared that he had omitted to use them. Whether this rose from undue attachment to France, from mistaken notions of American

interests, or from real dislike to the treaty, the result was the very evil he had been instructed to prevent. The French government misconceived the views and conduct of the United States, suspected their policy in regard to Great Britain, and when aware that the House of Representatives would execute the treaty made by Jay, became bitter in their resentment. Symptoms of this appeared in the capture of an American merchantman by a French privateer. Under these circumstances it was deemed expedient by Washington and his cabinet to recall Mr. Monroe, and appoint another American citizen in his stead.

The person chosen was Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina, elder brother of the late minister to London. Immediately after this appointment, which took place in July, despatches were received from Mr. Monroe, communicating complaints which had been addressed to him, against the American government by M. De La Croix, French minister of exterior relations, and his reply to the same. His reply, though it failed to change the policy of the French Directory, was deemed able and satisfactory by the Executive. Somewhat later came a letter from Mr. Monroe, written on the 24th, by which it appeared that the long and confidential letter written by Washington on December 22, and cited in a previous page of this chapter, had, by some chance, got into the hands of the French Directory, and "produced an ill effect."

In a reply to Monroe, dated August 25, Washington acknowledged the authenticity of the letter, "but I deny," added he, "that there is any thing contained in it that the French government could take exception to, unless the expression of an ardent wish that the United States might remain at peace with all the world, taking no part in the disputes of any part of it, should have produced this effect. I also give it as my opinion, that the sentiments of the mass of citizens of this country were in unison with mine."

And in conclusion, he observes: "My conduct in public and private life, as it relates to the important struggle in which the latter nation [France] is engaged, has been uniform from the commencement of it. and may be summed up in a few words. I have always wished well to the French revolution; that I have always given it as my decided opinion, that no nation had a right to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another; that every one had a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves; and that, if this country could, consistently with its engagements,

maintain a strict neutrality, and thereby preserve peace, it was bound to do so by motives of policy, interest, and every other consideration that ought to actuate a people situated as we are, already deeply in debt, and in a convalescent state from the struggle we have been engaged in ourselves.

"On these principles I have steadily and uniformly proceeded, bidding defiance to calumnies calculated to sow the seeds of distrust in the French nation, and to excite their belief of an influence possessed by Great Britain in the councils of this country, than which nothing is more unfounded and injurious."<sup>1</sup>

Still the resentful policy of the French continued, and, in October, they issued an *arret* ordering the seizure of British property found on board of American vessels, and of provisions bound for England—a direct violation of their treaty with the United States.

## CHAPTER XLII.

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS—MEETS THE TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS FOR THE LAST TIME—HIS SPEECH—REPLIES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE—MR. GILES—ANDREW JACKSON—OFFENSIVE PUBLICATION OF THE FRENCH MINISTER—JOHN ADAMS DECLARED PRESIDENT—WASHINGTON'S LETTER TO KNOX ON THE EVE OF HIS RETIREMENT—THE SPURIOUS LETTERS—HIS FAREWELL DINNER—JOHN ADAMS TAKES THE OATH OF OFFICE—GREETINGS OF WASHINGTON AT THE CLOSE OF THE CEREMONY.

The period for the presidential election was drawing near, and great anxiety began to be felt that Washington would consent to stand for a third term. No one, it was agreed, had greater claim to the enjoyment of retirement, in consideration of public services rendered; but it was thought the affairs of the country would be in a very precarious condition should he retire before the wars of Europe were brought to a close.

Washington, however, had made up his mind irrevocably on the subject, and resolved to announce, in a farewell address, his intention of retiring. Such an instrument, it will be recollected, had been prepared for him from his own notes by Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> For the entire letter see Washington's Writings, xi. 164.

Madison, when he had thought of retiring at the end of his first term. As he was no longer in confidential intimacy with Mr. Madison, he turned to Mr. Hamilton as his adviser and coadjutor, and appears to have consulted him on the subject early in the present year, for, in a letter dated New York, May 10, Hamilton writes: "When last in Philadelphia, you mentioned to me your wish that I should *re-dress* a certain paper which you had prepared. As it is important that a thing of this kind should be done with great care and much at leisure, touched and retouched, I submit a wish that, as soon as you have given it the body you mean to have, it may be sent to me."

The paper was accordingly sent on the 15th of May, in its rough state, altered in one part since Hamilton had seen it. "If you should think it best to throw the *whole* into a different form," writes Washington, "let me request, notwithstanding, that my draft may be returned to me (along with yours) with such amendments and corrections as to render it as perfect as the formation is susceptible of; curtailed if too verbose, and relieved of all tautology not necessary to enforce the ideas in the original or quoted part. My wish is, that the whole may appear in a plain style; and be handed to the public in an honest, unaffected, simple garb."

We forbear to go into the vexed question concerning this address; how much of it is founded on Washington's original "notes and heads of topics;" how much was elaborated by Madison, and how much is due to Hamilton's recasting and revision. The whole came under the supervision of Washington; and the instrument, as submitted to the press, was in his handwriting, with many ultimate corrections and alterations. Washington had no pride of authorship; his object always was to effect the purpose in hand, and for that he occasionally invoked assistance, to ensure a plain and clear exposition of his thoughts and intentions. The address certainly breathes his spirit throughout, is in perfect accordance with his words and actions, and "in an honest, unaffected, simple garb," embodies the system of policy on which he had acted throughout his administration. It was published in September, in a Philadelphia paper called the Daily Advertiser.<sup>1</sup>

The publication of the address produced a great sensation. Several of the State legislatures ordered it to be put on their journals. "The President's declining to be again elected,"

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<sup>1</sup> The reader will find the entire Address in the Appendix to this volume.

writes the elder Wolcott, "constitutes a most important epoch in our national affairs. The country meet the event with reluctance, but they do not feel that they can make any claim for the further services of a man who has conducted their armies through a successful war; has so largely contributed to establish a national government; has so long presided over our councils and directed the public administration, and in the most advantageous manner settled all national differences, and who can leave the administration where nothing but our folly and internal discord can render the country otherwise than happy."

The address acted as a notice, to hush the acrimonious abuse of him which the opposition was pouring forth under the idea that he would be a candidate for a renomination. "It will serve as a signal, like the dropping of a hat, for the party racers to start," writes Fisher Ames, "and I expect a great deal of noise, whipping and spurring."

Congress formed a quorum on the fifth day of December, the first day of the session which succeeded the publication of the Farewell Address. On the 7th, Washington met the two Houses of Congress for the last time.

In his speech he recommended an institution for the improvement of agriculture, a military academy, a national university, and a gradual increase of the navy. The disputes with France were made the subject of the following remarks: "While in our external relations some serious inconveniences and embarrassments have been overcome and others lessened, it is with much pain and deep regret I mention that circumstances of a very unwelcome nature have lately occurred. Our trade has suffered and is suffering extensive injuries in the West Indies from the cruisers and agents of the French Republic; and communications have been received from its minister here, which indicate the danger of a further disturbance of our commerce by its authority; and which are in other respects far from agreeable. It has been my constant, sincere, and earnest wish, in conformity with that of our nation, to maintain cordial harmony and a perfectly friendly understanding with that Republic. This wish remains unabated; and I shall persevere in the endeavor to fulfil it to the utmost extent of what shall be consistent with a just and indispensable regard to the rights and honor of our country; nor will I easily cease to cherish the expectation, that a spirit of justice, candor and friendship, on the part of the Republic, will eventually ensure success.

"In pursuing this course, however, I cannot forget what is due to the character of our government and nation; or to a



full and entire confidence in the good sense, patriotism, self-respect, and fortitude of my countrymen."

In concluding his address he observes, "The situation in which I now stand for the last time in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the administration of the present form of government commenced, and I cannot omit the occasion to congratulate you and my country on the success of the experiment, nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the universe and Sovereign Arbitrer of nations, that his providential care may be still extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved, and that the government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties may be perpetual."

The Senate, in their reply to the address, after concurring in its views of the national prosperity, as resulting from the excellence of the constitutional system and the wisdom of the legislative provisions, added, that they would be deficient in gratitude and justice did they not attribute a great portion of these advantages to the virtue, firmness and talents of his administration, conspicuously displayed in the most trying times, and on the most critical occasions.

Recalling his arduous services, civil and military, as well during the struggles of the Revolution as in the convulsive period of a later date, their warmest affections and anxious regards would accompany him in his approaching retirement.

"The most effectual consolation that can offer for the loss we are about to sustain, arises from the animating reflection, that the influence of your example will extend to your successors, and the United States thus continue to enjoy an able, upright, and energetic administration."

The reply of the House, after premising attention to the various subjects recommended to their consideration in the address, concluded by a warm expression of gratitude and admiration, inspired by the virtues and the services of the President, by his wisdom, firmness, moderation, and magnanimity; and testifying to the deep regret with which they contemplated his intended retirement from office.

"May you long enjoy that liberty which is so dear to you, and to which your name will ever be so dear," added they. "May your own virtue and a nation's prayers obtain the happiest sunshine for the decline of your days, and the choicest of future blessings. For our country's sake, and for the sake of republican liberty, it is our earnest wish that your example

may be the guide of your successors; and thus, after being the ornament and safeguard of the present age, become the patrimony of our descendants."

Objections, however, were made to some parts of the reply by Mr. Giles, of Virginia. He was for expunging such parts as eulogized the present administration, spoke of the wisdom and firmness of Washington, and regretted his retiring from office. He disapproved, he said, of the measures of the administration with respect to foreign relations; he believed its want of wisdom and firmness had conducted the nation to a crisis threatening greater calamity than any that had before occurred. He did not regret the President's retiring from office. He believed the government of the United States was founded on the broad basis of the people, that they were competent to their own government, and the remaining of no man in office was necessary to the success of that government. The people would truly be in a calamitous situation, if one man were essential to the existence of the government. He was convinced that the United States produces a thousand citizens capable of filling the presidential chair, and he would trust to the discernment of the people for a proper choice. Though the voice of all America should declare the President's retiring as a calamity, he could not join in the declaration, because he did not conceive it a misfortune. He hoped the President would be happy in his retirement, and he hoped he would retire.<sup>1</sup>

Twelve members voted for expunging those parts of the reply to which Mr. Giles had objected. Among the names of these members we find that of Andrew Jackson, a young man, twenty-nine years of age, as yet unknown to fame, and who had recently taken his seat as delegate from the newly admitted State of Tennessee. The vote in favor of the whole reply, however, was overwhelming.

The reverence and affection expressed for him in both Houses of Congress, and their regret at his intended retirement, were in unison with testimonials from various State legislatures and other public bodies, which were continually arriving since the publication of his Farewell Address.

During the actual session of Congress, Washington endeavored to prevent the misunderstandings, which were in danger of being augmented between the United States and the French government. In the preceding month of November, Mr. Adet, the French minister, had addressed a letter to the Secretary of

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<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Giles' speech, as reported in the *Aurora* newspaper.

## LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

State, recapitulating the complaints against the government of the United States made by his predecessors and himself, denouncing the *insidious* proclamation of neutrality and the wrongs growing out of it, and using language calculated to inflame the partisans of France: a copy of which letter had been sent to the press for publication. One of the immediate objects he had in view in timing the publication, was supposed by Washington to be to produce an effect on the presidential election; his ultimate object, to establish such an influence in the country as to sway the government and control its measures. Early in January, 1797, therefore, Washington requested Mr. Pickering, the Secretary of State, to address a letter to Mr. Pinckney, United States minister to France, stating all the complaints alleged by the French minister against the government, examining and reviewing the same, and accompanying the statement with a collection of letters and papers relating to the transactions therein adverted to.

"From a desire," writes he, "that the statements be full, fair, calm, and argumentative, without asperity or any thing more irritating in the comments that the narration of facts, which expose unfounded charges and assertions, does itself produce. I have wished that the letter to Mr. Pinckney may be revised over and over again. Much depends upon it, as it relates to ourselves, and in the eye of the world, whatever may be the effect, as it respects the governing powers of France."

The letter to Mr. Pinckney, with its accompanying documents, was laid before Congress on the 19th of January (1797), to be transmitted to that minister. "The immediate object of his mission," says Washington in a special message, "was to make that government such explanations of the principles and conduct of our own, as by manifesting our good faith, might remove all jealousy and discontent, and maintain that harmony and good understanding with the French Republic, which it has been my constant solicitude to preserve. A government which required only a knowledge of the *truth* to justify its measures, could but be anxious to have this fully and frankly displayed."

In the month of February the votes taken at the recent election were opened and counted in Congress; when Mr. Adams, having the highest number, was declared President, and Mr. Jefferson, having the next number, Vice-President; their term. of four years to commence on the 4th of March next ensuing.

Washington now began to count the days and hours that intervened between him and his retirement. On the day preceding it, he writes to his old fellow-soldier and political coad-

jutor, Henry Knox: "To the wearied traveller, who sees a resting-place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do this in peace, is too much to be endured by some. To misrepresent my motives, to reprobate my politics, and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects which cannot be relinquished by those who will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political system. The consolation, however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my country, unequivocally expressed by its representatives, deprive their sting of its poison, and place in the same point of view both the weakness and malignity of their efforts.

"Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love, and among these, be assured, you are one. . . . The remainder of my life, which in the course of nature cannot be long, will be occupied in rural amusements; and though I shall seclude myself as much as possible from the noisy and bustling world, none would, more than myself, be regaled by the company of those I esteem, at Mount Vernon; more than twenty miles from which, after I arrive there, it is not likely that I shall ever be."

On the morning of the 3d of March, the last day of his official career, Washington addressed a letter to the Secretary of State on the subject of the spurious letters, heretofore mentioned,<sup>1</sup> first published by the British in 1776, and subsequently republished during his administration, by some of his political enemies. He had suffered every attack on his executive conduct to pass unnoticed while he remained in public life, but conceived it a justice due to his character solemnly to pronounce those letters a base forgery, and he desired that the present letter might be "deposited in the office of the Department of State, as a testimony to the truth to the present generation and to posterity."

On the same day he gave a kind of farewell dinner to the foreign ministers and their wives, Mr. and Mrs. Adams, Mr. Jefferson, and other conspicuous personages of both sexes. "During the dinner much hilarity prevailed," says Bishop White, who was present. When the cloth was removed Washington filled his glass: "Ladies and gentlemen," said he,

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Washington*, vol. iii. 8vo, pp. 360, 361.

“this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man ; I do it with sincerity, wishing you all possible happiness.”

The gayety of the company was checked in an instant ; all felt the importance of this leave-taking ; Mrs. Liston, the wife of the British minister, was so much affected that tears streamed down her cheeks.

On the 4th of March, an immense crowd had gathered about Congress Hall. At eleven o'clock, Mr. Jefferson took the oath as Vice-President in the presence of the Senate ; and proceeded with that body to the chamber of the House of Representatives, which was densely crowded, many ladies occupying chairs ceded to them by members.

After a time, Washington entered amidst enthusiastic cheers and acclamations, and the waving of handkerchiefs. Mr. Adams soon followed and was likewise well received, but not with like enthusiasm. Having taken the oath of office, Mr. Adams, in his inaugural address, spoke of his predecessor as one “who, by a long course of great actions, regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, had merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

At the close of the ceremony, as Washington moved toward the door to retire, there was a rush from the gallery to the corridor that threatened the loss of life or limb, so eager were the throng to catch a last look of one who had so long been the object of public veneration. When Washington was in the street he waved his hat in return for the cheers of the multitude, his countenance radiant with benignity, his gray hairs streaming in the wind. The crowd followed him to his door ; there, turning round, his countenance assumed a grave and almost melancholy expression, his eyes were bathed in tears, his emotions were too great for utterance, and only by gestures could he indicate his thanks and convey his farewell blessing.<sup>1</sup>

In the evening a splendid banquet was given to him by the principal inhabitants of Philadelphia in the Amphitheatre, which was decorated with emblematical paintings. All the heads of departments, the foreign ministers, several officers of the late army, and various persons of note were present. Among the paintings, one represented the home of his heart, the home to which he was about to hasten — Mount Vernon.

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<sup>1</sup> From personal recollections of William A. Duer, late President of Columbia College.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON — INFLUX OF STRANGE FACES —  
LAWRENCE LEWIS — MISS NELLY CUSTIS — WASHINGTON'S COUNSEL  
IN LOVE MATTERS — A ROMANTIC EPISODE — RETURN OF  
GEORGE WASHINGTON LAFAYETTE.

His official career being terminated, Washington set off for Mount Vernon accompanied by Mrs. Washington, her granddaughter Miss Nelly Custis, and George Washington Lafayette, with his preceptors.

Of the enthusiastic devotion manifested towards him wherever he passed, he takes the following brief and characteristic notice: "The attentions we met with on our journey were very flattering, and to some, whose minds are differently formed from mine, would have been highly relished; but I avoided, in every instance where I had any previous notice of the intention, and could, by earnest entreaties, prevail, all parade and escorts."

He is at length at Mount Vernon, that haven of repose to which he had so often turned a wishful eye, throughout his agitated and anxious life, and where he trusted to pass quietly and serenely the remainder of his days. He finds himself, however, "in the situation of a new beginner; almost every thing about him required considerable repairs, and a house is immediately to be built for the reception and safe keeping of his military, civil, and private papers." "In a word," writes he, "I am already surrounded by joiners, masons, and painters, and such is my anxiety to be out of their hands, that I have scarcely a room to put a friend into, or to sit in myself, without the music of hammers and the odoriferous scent of paint."

Still he is at Mount Vernon, and as the spring opens the rural beauties of the country exert their sweetening influence. In a letter to his friend Oliver Wolcott, who, as Secretary of the Treasury, was still acting on "the great theatre," he adverts but briefly to public affairs. "For myself," adds he, exultingly, "having turned aside from the broad walks of political into the narrow paths of private life, I shall leave it with those whose duty it is to consider subjects of this sort, and, as every good citizen ought to do, conform to whatsoever the ruling powers shall decide. To make and sell a little flour annually, to repair houses going fast to ruin, to build one for the security

of my papers of a public nature, and to amuse myself in agricultural and rural pursuits, will constitute employment for the few years I have to remain on this terrestrial globe. If, also, I could now and then meet the friends I esteem, it would fill the measure and add zest to my enjoyments; but, if ever this happens, it must be under my own vine and fig-tree, as I do not think it probable that I shall go beyond twenty miles from them."

And again, to another friend he indulges in pleasant anticipations: "Retired from noise myself and the responsibility attached to public employment, my hours will glide smoothly on. My best wishes, however, for the prosperity of our country will always have the first place in my thoughts; while to repair buildings and to cultivate my farms, which require close attention, will occupy the few years, perhaps days, I may be a sojourner here, as I am now in the sixty-fifth year of my peregrination through life."<sup>1</sup>

A letter to his friend James McHenry, Secretary of War, furnishes a picture of his every-day life. "I am indebted to you," writes he, "for several unacknowledged letters; but never mind that; go on as if you had answers. You are at the source of information, and can find many things to relate, while I have nothing to say that could either inform or amuse a Secretary of War in Philadelphia. I might tell him that I begin my diurnal course with the sun; that, if my hirelings are not in their places at that time, I send them messages of sorrow for their indisposition; that, having put these wheels in motion, I examine the state of things further; that the more they are probed the deeper I find the wounds which my buildings have sustained, by an absence and neglect of eight years; that, by the time I have accomplished these matters, breakfast (a little after seven o'clock, about the time I presume you are taking leave of Mrs. McHenry) is ready; that, this being over, I mount my horse and ride round my farms, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner, at which I rarely miss seeing strange faces, come, as they say, out of respect to me. Pray, would not the word curiosity answer as well? And how different this from having a few social friends at a cheerful board! The usual time for sitting at table, a walk, and tea bring me within the dawn of candle light; previous to which, if not prevented by company, I resolve that, as soon as the glimmering taper supplies the place of the great luminary, I will retire to my

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Wm. Heath. Writings, xi. 190.

writing table and acknowledge the letters I have received ; but when the lights are brought I feel tired and disinclined to engage in this work, conceiving that the next night will do as well. The next night comes, and with it the same cause for postponement, and so on. Having given you the history of a day, it will serve for a year, and, I am persuaded, you will not require a second edition of it. But it may strike you that in this detail no mention is made of any portion of time allotted for reading. The remark would be just, for I have not looked into a book since I came home ; nor shall I be able to do it until I have discharged my workmen ; probably not before the nights grow longer, when possibly I may be looking in *Doomsday Book*."

In his solitary rides about Mount Vernon and its woodlands, fond and melancholy thoughts would occasionally sadden the landscape as his mind reverted to past times and early associates. In a letter to Mrs. S. Fairfax, now in England, he writes : " It is a matter of sore regret when I cast my eyes toward Belvoir, which I often do, to reflect that the former inhabitants of it, with whom we lived in such harmony and friendship, no longer reside there, and the ruins only can be viewed as the mementoes of former pleasures."

The influx of strange faces alluded to in the letter to Mr. McHenry, soon became overwhelming, and Washington felt the necessity of having some one at hand to relieve him from a part of the self-imposed duties of Virginia hospitality.

With this view he bethought him of his nephew, Lawrence Lewis, the same who had gained favor with him by volunteering in the Western expedition, and accompanying General Knox as aide-de-camp. He accordingly addressed a letter to him in which he writes : " Whenever it is convenient to you to make this place your home, I shall be glad to see you. . . . As both your aunt and I are in the decline of life, and regular in our habits, especially in our hours of rising and going to bed, I require some person (fit and proper) to ease me of the trouble of entertaining company, particularly of nights, as it is my inclination to retire (and unless prevented by very particular company, I always do retire), either to bed or to my study soon after candle light. In taking those duties (which hospitality obliges one to bestow on company) off my hands, it would render me a very acceptable service."<sup>1</sup>

In consequence of this invitation, Lawrence thenceforward became an occasional inmate at Mount Vernon. The place at

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<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter.



this time possessed attractions for gay as well as grave, and was often enlivened by young company. One great attraction was Miss Nelly Custis, Mrs. Washington's granddaughter, who, with her brother George W. P. Custis, had been adopted by the general at their father's death, when they were quite children, and brought up by him with the most affectionate care. He was fond of children, especially girls; as to boys, with all his spirit of command, he found them at times somewhat ungovernable. I can govern men, would he say, but I cannot govern boys. Miss Nelly had grown up under the special eye of her grandmother, to whom she was devotedly attached, and who was particular in enforcing her observance of all her lessons, as well as instructing her in the arts of housekeeping. She was a great favorite with the general; whom, as we have before observed, she delighted with her gay whims and sprightly sallies, often overcoming his habitual gravity, and surprising him into a hearty laugh.

She was now maturing into a lovely and attractive woman, and the attention she received began to awaken some solicitude in the general's mind. This is evinced in a half-sportive letter of advice written to her during a temporary absence from Mount Vernon, when she was about to make her first appearance at a ball at Georgetown. It is curious as a specimen of Washington's counsel in love matters. It would appear that Miss Nelly, to allay his solicitude, had already, in her correspondence, professed "a perfect apathy toward the youth of the present day, and a determination never to give herself a moment's uneasiness on account of any of them." Washington doubted the firmness and constancy of her resolves. "Men and women," writes he, "feel the same inclination towards each other *now* that they always have done, and which they will continue to do, until there is a new order of things; and you, as others have done, may find that the passions of your sex are easier raised than allayed. Do not, therefore, boast too soon, nor too strongly of your insensibility. . . . Love is said to be an involuntary passion, and it is, therefore, contended that it cannot be resisted. This is true in part only, for like all things else, when nourished and supplied plentifully with aliment, it is rapid in its progress; but let these be withdrawn, and it may be stifled in its birth, or much stunted in its growth. . . . Although we cannot avoid *first* impressions, we may assuredly place them under guard. . . . When the fire is beginning to kindle, and your heart growing warm, propound these questions to it. Who is this invader? Have I a competent knowledge

of him? Is he a man of good character? A man of sense? For, be assured, a sensible woman can never be happy with a fool. What has been his walk in life? . . . Is his fortune sufficient to maintain me in the manner I have been accustomed to live, and as my sisters do live? And is he one to whom my friends can have no reasonable objection? If all these interrogatories can be satisfactorily answered, there will remain but one more to be asked; that, however, is an important one. Have I sufficient ground to conclude that his affections are engaged by me? Without this the heart of sensibility will struggle against a passion that is not reciprocated."<sup>1</sup>

The sage counsels of Washington, and the susceptible feelings of Miss Nelly, were soon brought to the test by the residence of Lawrence Lewis at Mount Vernon. A strong attachment for her grew up on his part, or perhaps already existed, and was strengthened by daily intercourse. It was favorably viewed by his uncle. Whether it was fully reciprocated was uncertain. A formidable rival to Lewis appeared in the person of young Carroll of Carrollton, who had just returned from Europe, adorned with the graces of foreign travel, and whose suit was countenanced by Mrs. Washington. These were among the poetic days of Mount Vernon, when its halls echoed to the tread of lovers. They were halcyon days with Miss Nelly, as she herself declared, in after years, to a lady, from whom we have the story: "I was young and romantic then," said she, "and fond of wandering alone by moonlight in the woods of Mount Vernon. Grandmamma thought it wrong and unsafe, and scolded and coaxed me into a promise that I would not wander in the woods again *unaccompanied*. But I was missing one evening, and was brought home from the interdicted woods to the drawing-room, where the general was walking up and down with his hands behind him, as was his wont. Grandmamma, seated in her great arm-chair, opened a severe reproof."

Poor Miss Nelly was reminded of her promise, and taxed with her delinquency. She knew that she had done wrong—admitted her fault, and essayed no excuse; but, when there was a slight pause, moved to retire from the room. She was just shutting the door when she overheard the general attempting, in a low voice, to intercede in her behalf. "My dear," observed he, "I would say no more—perhaps she was not alone."

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<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter.

His intercession stopped Miss Nelly in her retreat. She reopened the door and advanced up to the general with a firm step. "Sir," said she, "you brought me up to speak the truth, and when I told grandmamma I was alone, I hope you believed *I was alone*."

The general made one of his most magnanimous bows. "My child," replied he, "I beg your pardon."

We will anticipate dates, and observe that the romantic episode of Miss Nelly Custis terminated to the general's satisfaction; she became the happy wife of Lawrence Lewis, as will be recorded in a future page.

Early in the autumn, Washington had been relieved from his constant solicitude about the fortunes of Lafayette. Letters received by George W. Lafayette from friends in Hamburg, informed the youth that his father and family had been liberated from Olmutz and were on their way to Paris, with the intention of embarking for America. George was disposed to sail for France immediately, eager to embrace his parents and sisters in the first moments of their release. Washington urged him to defer his departure until he should receive letters from the prisoners themselves, lest they should cross the ocean in different directions at the same time, and pass each other, which would be a great shock to both parties. George, however, was not to be persuaded, and "I could not withhold my assent," writes Washington, "to the gratification of his wishes, to fly to the arms of those whom he holds most dear."

George and his tutor, Mr. Frestel, sailed from New York on the 26th of October. Washington writes from Mount Vernon to Lafayette: "This letter, I hope and expect, will be presented to you by your son, who is highly deserving of such parents as you and your amiable lady.

"He can relate, much better than I can describe, my participation in your sufferings, my solicitude for your relief, the measures I adopted, though ineffectual, to facilitate your liberation from an unjust and cruel imprisonment, and the joy I experienced at the news of its accomplishment. I shall hasten, therefore, to congratulate you, and be assured that no one can do it with more cordiality, with more sincerity, or with greater affection on the restoration of that liberty which every act of your life entitles you to the enjoyment of; and I hope I may add, to the uninterrupted possession of your estates, and the confidence of your country."

The account which George W. Lafayette had received of the liberation of the prisoners of Olmutz was premature. It did

not take place until the 19th of September, nor was it until in the following month of February that the happy meeting took place between George and his family, whom he found residing in the chateau of a relative in Holstein.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

PARTING ADDRESS OF THE FRENCH DIRECTORY TO MR. MONROE — THE NEW AMERICAN MINISTER ORDERED TO LEAVE THE REPUBLIC — CONGRESS CONVENED — MEASURES OF DEFENCE RECOMMENDED — WASHINGTON'S CONCERN — APPOINTMENT OF THREE ENVOYS EXTRAORDINARY — DOUBTS THEIR SUCCESS — HEARS OF AN OLD COMPANION IN ARMS — THE THREE MINISTERS AND TALLEYRAND — THEIR DEGRADING TREATMENT — THREATENED WAR WITH FRANCE — WASHINGTON APPOINTED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF — ARRANGES FOR THREE MAJOR GENERALS — KNOX AGGRIEVED.

WASHINGTON had been but a few months at Mount Vernon, when he received intelligence that his successor in office had issued a proclamation for a special session of Congress. He was not long in doubt as to its object. The French government had declared, on the recall of Mr. Monroe, that it would not receive any new minister plenipotentiary from the United States until that power should have redressed the grievances of which the republic had complained. When Mr. Monroe had his audience of leave, Mr. Barras, the president of the Directory, addressed him in terms complimentary to himself, but insulting to his country. "The French Republic hopes," said he, "that the successors of Columbus, of Raleigh, and of Penn, ever proud of their liberty, will never forget that they owe it to France. . . . In their wisdom, they will weigh the magnanimous benevolence of the French people with the artful caresses of perfidious designers, who meditate to draw them back to their ancient slavery. Assure, Mr. Minister, the good American people that, like them, we adore liberty; that they will always have our esteem, and that they will find in the French people the republican generosity which knows how to accord peace, as it knows how to make its sovereignty respected.

"As to you, Mr. Minister Plenipotentiary, you have fought for the principles, you have known the true interests of your country. Depart with our regrets. We give up, in you, a rep-

representative of America, and we retain the remembrance of the citizen whose personal qualities honor that title."

A few days afterwards, when Mr. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney presented himself as successor to Mr. Monroe, the Directory refused to receive him, and followed up the indignity by ordering him to leave the territories of the republic. Its next step was to declare applicable to American ships the rules in regard to the neutrals, contained in the treaty which Washington had signed with England.

It was in view of these facts and of the captures of American vessels by French cruisers, that President Adams had issued a proclamation to convene Congress on the 15th of May. In his opening speech, he adverted especially to what had fallen from Mr. Barras in Monroe's audience of leave. "The speech of the President," said he, "discloses sentiments more alarming than the refusal of a minister, because more dangerous to our independence and union; and, at the same time, studiously marked with indignities towards the government of the United States. It evinces a disposition to separate the people from their government; to persuade them that they have different affections, principles, and interests from those of their fellow-citizens, whom they themselves have chosen to manage their common concerns, and thus to produce divisions fatal to our peace. Such attempts ought to be repelled with a decision which shall convince France and the world, that we are not a degraded people, humiliated under a colonial spirit of fear, and sense of inferiority, fitted to be the miserable instrument of foreign influence, and regardless of national honor, character, and interest."

Still he announced his intention to institute a fresh attempt by negotiation, to effect an amicable adjustment of differences, on terms compatible with the rights, duties, interests, and honor of the nation, but in the mean time he recommended to Congress to provide effectual measures of defence.

Though personally retired from public life, Washington was too sincere a patriot to be indifferent to public affairs, and felt acutely the unfriendly acts of the French government, so repugnant to our rights and dignity. "The President's speech," writes he, "will, I conceive, draw forth, mediately or immediately, an expression of the public mind; and as it is the right of the people that this should be carried into effect, their sentiments ought to be unequivocally known, that the principles on which the government has acted, and which, from the President's speech, are likely to be continued, may

either be changed, or the opposition that is endeavoring to embarrass every measure of the Executive, may meet effectual discountenance. Things cannot and ought not to remain any longer in their present disagreeable state. Nor, should the idea that the government and the people have different views, be suffered any longer to prevail at home or abroad; for it is not only injurious to us, but disgraceful also, that a government constituted as ours is, should be administered contrary to their interest, if the fact be so."<sup>1</sup>

In pursuance of the policy announced by Mr. Adams, three envoys extraordinary were appointed to the French republic; viz, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, John Marshall, and Elbridge Gerry; the two former Federalists, the latter a Democrat. The object of their mission, according to the President, was "to dissipate umbrages, remove prejudices, rectify errors, and adjust all differences by a treaty between the two powers."

Washington doubted an adjustment of the differences. "Candor," said he, "is not a more conspicuous trait in the character of governments than it is of individuals. It is hardly to be expected, then, that the Directory of France will acknowledge its errors and tread back its steps immediately. This would announce at once, that there has been precipitancy and injustice in the measures they have pursued; or that they were incapable of judging, and had been deceived by false appearances."

About this time he received a pamphlet on the "Military and Political Situation of France." It was sent to him by the author, General Dumas, who, in the time of our Revolution, had been an officer in the army of the Count de Rochambeau. "Your Excellency," writes Dumas, "will observe in it (the pamphlet) the effect of your lessons." Then speaking of his old military chief: "General Rochambeau," adds he, "is still at his country seat near Vendome. He enjoys there tolerably good health considering his great age, and reckons, as well as his military family, amongst his most dear and glorious remembrances, that of the time we had the honor to serve under your command."

Some time had elapsed since Washington had heard of his old companion in arms, who had experienced some of the melodramatic vicissitudes of the French revolution. After the arrest of the king he had taken anew the oath of the constitution, and commanded the army of the north, having again received the

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Thomas Pinckney. *Writings*, xi. 202.

baton of field-marshal. Thwarted in his plans by the minister of war, he had resigned and retired to his estate near Vendome; but, during the time of terror had been arrested, conducted to Paris, thrown into the conciergerie, and condemned to death. When the car came to convey a number of the victims to the guillotine, he was about to mount it, but the executioner seeing it full, thrust him back. "Stand back, old marshal," cried he, roughly, "your turn will come by and by." (*Retire toi, vieux maréchal, ton tour viendra plus tard.*) A sudden change in political affairs saved his life, and enabled him to return to his home near Vendome, where he now resided."

In a reply to Dumas, which Washington forwarded by the minister plenipotentiary about to depart for France, he sent his cordial remembrances to De Rochambeau.<sup>1</sup>

The three ministers met in Paris on the 4th of October, (1797), but were approached by Talleyrand and his agents in a manner which demonstrated that the avenue to justice could only be opened by gold. Their official report<sup>2</sup> reveals the whole of this dishonorable intrigue. It states that Mr. Pinckney received a visit from Mr. Bellarni, the secret agent of Mr. Talleyrand, who assured him that Citizen Talleyrand had the highest esteem for America and the citizens of the United States, and was most anxious for the reconciliation with France. With that view some of the most offensive passages in the speech of President Adams (in May, 1797) must be expunged, and a *douceur* of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars put at the disposal of Mr. Talleyrand for the use of the Directory, and a large loan made by America to France.

On the 20th of October, the same subject was resumed in the apartments of the plenipotentiary, and on this occasion, beside the secret agent, an intimate friend of Talleyrand was present. The expunging of the passages in the President's speech was again insisted on, and it was added that, after that, money was the principal object. "We must have money—a great deal of money!" were his words.

At a third conference, October 21, the sum was fixed at 32,000,000 francs (6,400,000 dollars), as a loan secured on the *Dutch contributions*, and 250,000 dollars in the form of a *douceur* to the Directory.

<sup>1</sup> The worthy De Rochambeau survived the storms of the Revolution. In 1803 he was presented to Napoleon, who, pointing to Berthier and other generals who had once served under his orders, said: "Marshal, behold your scholars." "The scholars have surpassed their master," replied the modest veteran.

In the following year he received the cross of grand officer of the legion of honor, and a marshal's pension. He died full of years and honors, in 1807.

<sup>2</sup> American State Papers, vols. iii. and iv.

At a subsequent meeting, October 27, the same secret agent said, "Gentlemen, you mistake the point, *you say nothing of the money you are to give — you make no offer of money — on that point you are not explicit.*" "We are explicit enough," replied the American envoys. "We will not give you one farthing; and before coming here we should have thought such an offer as you now propose, would have been regarded as a mortal insult."

On this indignant reply, the wily agent intimated that if they would only pay, by way of fees, just as they would to a lawyer, who should plead their cause, the sum required for the private use of the Directory, they might remain at Paris until they should receive further orders from America as to the loan required for government.<sup>1</sup>

Being inaccessible to any such disgraceful and degrading propositions, the envoys remained several months in Paris unaccredited, and finally returned at separate times, without an official discussion of the object of their mission.<sup>2</sup>

During the residence of the envoys in Paris, the Directory, believing the *people* of the United States would not sustain their government in a war against France, proceeded to enact a law subjecting to capture and condemnation neutral vessels and their cargoes, if any portion of the latter was of British fabric or produce, although the entire property might belong to neutrals. As the United States were at the time the great neutral carriers of the world, this iniquitous decree struck at a vital point in their maritime power.<sup>3</sup>

When this act and the degrading treatment of the American envoys became known, the spirit of the nation was aroused, and war with France seemed inevitable.

The crisis was at once brought to Washington's own door. "You ought to be aware," writes Hamilton to him, May 19, 1777, "that in the event of an open rupture with France, the public voice will again call you to command the armies of your country; and though all who are attached to you will, from attachment as well as public considerations, deplore an occasion which should once more tear you from that repose to which you have so good a right, yet it is the opinion of all those with whom I converse, that you will be compelled to make the sacrifice. All your past labors may demand, to give them efficacy, this further, this very great sacrifice."

<sup>1</sup> See *Life of Talleyrand*, by the Rev. Charles K. McHarg, pp. 161, 162.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall left France April 16, 1796; Gerry on the 26th of July. Pinckney, detained by the illness of his daughter, did not arrive in the United States until early in October.

<sup>3</sup> *McHarg's Life of Talleyrand*, 160.



The government was resolved upon vigorous measures. Congress, on the 28th of May, authorized Mr. Adams to enlist ten thousand men as a provisional army, to be called by him into actual service, in case of hostilities.

Adams was perplexed by the belligerent duties thus suddenly devolved upon him. How should he proceed in forming an army? Should he call on all the old generals who had figured in the Revolution, or appoint a young set? Military tactics were changed, and a new kind of enemy was to be met. "If the French come here," said he, "we will have to march with a quick step and attack, for in that way only they are said to be vulnerable."

These and other questions he propounded to Washington by letter, on the 22d of June. "I must tax you sometimes for advice," writes he. "We must have your name, if you will in any case permit us to use it. There will be more efficacy in it than in many an army."

And McHenry, the Secretary of War, writes, about the same time: "You see how the storm thickens, and that our vessel will soon require its ancient pilot. Will you—may we flatter ourselves, that, in a crisis so awful and important, you will—accept the command of all our armies? I hope you will, because you alone can unite all hearts and hands, if it is possible that they can be united."

In a reply to the President's letter, Washington writes, on the 4th of July: "At the epoch of my retirement, an invasion of these States by any European power, or even the probability of such an event happening in my days, was so far from being contemplated by me, that I had no conception that that or any other occurrence would arise in so short a period, which could turn my eyes from the shade of Mount Vernon. . . . In case of *actual invasion*, by a formidable force, I certainly should not intrench myself under the cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my country to assist in repelling it."

And in his reply of the same date, to the Secretary of War, he writes: "I see, as you do, that clouds are gathering, and that a storm may ensue; and I find, too, from a variety of hints, that my quiet, under these circumstances, does not promise to be of long continuance. . . .

"As my whole life has been dedicated to my country in one shape or another, for the poor remains of it, it is not an object to contend for ease and quiet, when all that is valuable is at stake, further than to be satisfied that the sacrifice I should make of these, is acceptable and desired by my country."

Before these letters were despatched he had already been nominated to the Senate (July 3) commander-in-chief of all the armies raised or to be raised. His nomination was unanimously confirmed on the following day, and it was determined that the Secretary of War should be the bearer of the commission to Mount Vernon, accompanied by a letter from the President. "The reasons and motives," writes Mr. Adams in his instructions to the Secretary, "which prevailed with me to venture upon such a step as the nomination of this great and illustrious character, whose voluntary resignation alone occasioned my introduction to the office I now hold, were too numerous to be detailed in this letter, and are too obvious and important to escape the observation of any part of America or Europe. But as it is a movement of great delicacy, it will require all your address to communicate the subject in a manner that shall be unoffensive to his feelings and consistent with all the respect that is due from me to him.

"If the general should decline the appointment, all the world will be silent and respectfully assent. If he should accept it, all the world, except the enemies of this country, will rejoice."

Mr. McHenry was instructed to consult Washington upon the organization of the army, and upon every thing relating to it. He was the bearer also of a letter from Hamilton. "I use the liberty," writes he, "which my attachment to you and to the public authorizes, to offer you my opinion, that you should not decline the appointment. It is evident that the public satisfaction at it is lively and universal. It is not to be doubted that the circumstances will give an additional spring to the public mind, will tend much to unite, and will facilitate the measures which the conjuncture requires."

It was with a heavy heart that Washington found his dream of repose once more interrupted; but his strong fidelity to duty would not permit him to hesitate. He accepted the commission, however, with the condition that he should not be called into the field until the army was in a situation to require his presence; or it should become indispensable by the urgency of circumstances.

"In making this reservation," added he, in his letter to the President, "I beg it to be understood that I do not mean to withhold any assistance to arrange and organize the army, which you may think I can afford. I take the liberty, also, to mention that I must decline having my acceptance considered as drawing after it any immediate charge upon the public; or

that I can receive any emoluments annexed to the appointment before entering into a situation to incur expense."

He made another reservation, through the Secretary of War, but did not think proper to embody it in his public letter of acceptance, as that would be communicated to the Senate, which was, that the principal officers in the line and of the staff should be such as he could place confidence in.

As to the question which had perplexed Mr. Adams whether, in forming the army, to call on all the old generals or appoint a new set, Washington's idea was that, as the armies about to be raised were commencing *de novo*, the President had the right to make officers of citizens or soldiers at his discretion, availing himself of the best aid the country afforded. That no officer of the old army, disbanded fourteen years before, could *expect*, much less *claim*, an appointment on any other ground than superior experience, brilliant exploits, and general celebrity founded on merit.

It was with such views that, in the arrangements made by him with the Secretary of War, the three major-generals stood, Hamilton, who was to be inspector-general, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (not yet returned from Europe), and Knox: in which order he wished their commissions to be dated. The appointment of Hamilton as second in command was desired by the public, on account of his distinguished ability, energy, and fidelity. Pickering, in recommending it, writes: "The enemy whom we are now preparing to encounter, veterans in arms, led by able and active officers, and accustomed to victory, must be met by the best blood, talents, energy, and experience, that our country can produce." Washington, speaking of him to the President, says: "Although Colonel Hamilton has never acted in the character of a general officer, yet, his opportunities as the principal and most confidential aid of the commander-in-chief, afforded him the means of viewing every thing on a larger scale than those whose attention was confined to divisions or brigades, who know nothing of the correspondences of the commander-in-chief, or of the various orders to, or transactions with, the general staff of the army. These advantages, and his having served with usefulness in the old Congress, in the general convention, and having filled one of the most important departments of government, with acknowledged abilities and integrity, have placed him on high ground, and made him a conspicuous character in the United States and in Europe. . . .

"By some he is considered an ambitious man, and, therefore, a dangerous one. That he is ambitious, I shall readily grant,

but it is of that laudable kind which prompts a man to excel in whatever he takes in hand. He is enterprising, quick in his perceptions, and his judgment intuitively great — qualities essential to a military character.”

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney was placed next in rank, not solely on account of his military qualifications, which were great, but of his popularity and influence in the Southern States, where his connections were numerous and powerful; it being apprehended that, if the French intended an invasion in force, their operations would commence south of Maryland; in which case it would be all-important to embark General Pinckney and his connections heartily in the active scenes that would follow.

By this arrangement Hamilton and Pinckney took precedence of Knox, an officer whom Washington declared he loved and esteemed; but he trusted the exigencies of the case would reconcile the latter to the position assigned to him. “Viewing things in this light,” writes he to Knox, July 16, “I would fain hope, as we are forming an army anew, which army, if needful at all, is to fight for every thing which ought to be dear and sacred to freemen, that former rank will be forgotten, and, among the fit and chosen characters, the only contention will be who shall be foremost in zeal at this crisis to serve his country, in whatever situation circumstances may place him.”

The reply of Knox, written in the glow of the moment, bespoke how deeply his warm, impulsive feelings were wounded. “I yesterday received your favor,” writes he, “which I opened with all the delightful sensations of affection, which I always before experienced upon the receipt of your letters. But I found, on its perusal, a striking instance of that vicissitude of human affairs and friendships, which you so justly describe. I read it with astonishment, which, however, subsided in the reflection that few men know themselves, and therefore, that for more than twenty years I have been acting under a perfect delusion. Conscious myself of entertaining for you a sincere, active, and invariable friendship, I easily believed it was reciprocal. Nay more, I flattered myself with your esteem and respect in a military point of view. But I find that others, greatly my juniors in rank, have been, upon a scale of comparison, preferred before me. Of this, perhaps, the world may also concur with you that I have no just reason to complain. But every intelligent and just principle of society required, either that I should have been previously consulted in an arrangement, in which my feelings and happiness have been so

much wounded, or that I should not have been dragged forth to public view at all, to make the comparison so conspicuously odious."

After continuing in an expostulatory vein, followed by his own views of the probable course of invasion, he adds, toward the close of his letter, — "I have received no other notification of an appointment than what the newspapers announce. When it shall please the Secretary of War to give me the information, I shall endeavor to make him a suitable answer. At present, I do not perceive how it can possibly be to any other purport than in the negative."

In conclusion, he writes: "In whatever situation I shall be, I shall always remember with pleasure and gratitude, the friendship and confidence with which you have heretofore honored me.

"I am, with the highest attachment, etc."

Washington was pained in the extreme at the view taken by General Knox of the arrangement, and at the wound which it had evidently given to his feelings and his pride. In a letter to the President (25th September), he writes: "With respect to General Knox, I can say with truth there is no man in the United States with whom I have been in habits of greater intimacy, no one whom I have loved more sincerely, nor any for whom I have had a greater friendship. But esteem, love, and friendship can have no influence on my mind, when I conceive that the subjugation of our government and independence are the objects aimed at by the enemies of our peace, and when possibly our all is at stake."

In reply to Knox, Washington, although he thought the reasons assigned in his previous letter ought to have been sufficiently explanatory of his motives, went into long details of the circumstances under which the military appointments had been made, and the important considerations which dictated them; and showing that it was impossible for him to consult Knox previously to the nomination of the general officers.

"I do not know," writes he, "that these explanations will afford you any satisfaction or produce any change in your determination, but it was just to myself to make them. If there has been any management in the business, it has been concealed from me. I have had no agency therein, nor have I conceived a thought on the subject that has not been disclosed to you with the utmost sincerity and frankness of heart. And now, notwithstanding the insinuations, which are implied in your letter, of the vicissitudes of friendship and the inconstancy of mine,

I will pronounce with decision, that it ever has been, and, notwithstanding the unkindness of the charge, ever will be, for aught I know to the contrary, warm and sincere."

The genial heart of Knox was somewhat soothed and mollified by the "welcome and much esteemed letter of Washington, in which," said he, "I recognize fully all the substantial friendship and kindness which I have invariably experienced from you." Still he was tenacious of the point of precedence, and unwilling to serve in a capacity which would compromise his pride. "If an invasion shall take place," writes he, "I shall deeply regret all circumstances which would insuperably bar my having an active command in the field. But if such a measure should be my destiny, I shall frequently petition to serve as one of your aides-de-camp, which, with permission, I shall do, with all the cordial devotion and affection of which my soul is capable."

On the 18th of October Washington learnt through the *Gazettes* of the safe arrival of General Pinckney at New York, and was anxious lest there should be a second part of the difficulty created by General Knox. On the 21st he writes again to Knox, reiterating his wish to have him in the augmented corps a major-general.

"We shall have either *no war*, or a *severe contest* with France; in either case, if you will allow me to express my opinion, this is the most eligible time for you to come forward. In the first case, to assist with your counsel and aid in making judicious provisions and arrangements to advert it; in the other case, to share in the glory of defending your country, and, by making all secondary objects yield to that great and primary object, display a mind superior to embarrassing punctilios at so critical a moment as the present.

"After having expressed these sentiments with the frankness of undisguised friendship, it is hardly necessary to add, that, if you should finally decline the appointment of major-general, there is none to whom I would give a more decided preference as an aide-de-camp, the offer of which is highly flattering, honorable, and grateful to my feelings, and for which I entertain a high sense. But, my dear General Knox, and here again I repeat to you, in the language of candor and friendship, examine well your own mind upon this subject. Do not unite yourself to the suite of a man, whom you may consider as the primary cause of what you call a degradation, with unpleasant sensations. This, while it is gnawing upon you, would, if I should come to the knowledge of it, make me unhappy; as my first

wish would be that my military family, and the whole army, should consider themselves a band of brothers, willing and ready to die for each other."

Before Knox could have received this letter, he had on the 23d of October, written to the Secretary of War, declining to serve under Hamilton and Pinckney, on the principle that "no officer can consent to his own degradation by serving in an inferior station." General Pinckney, on the contrary, cheerfully accepted his appointment, although placed under Hamilton, who had been of inferior rank to him in the last war. It was with the greatest pleasure he had seen that officer's name at the head of the list of major-generals, and applauded the discernment which had placed him there. He regretted that General Knox had declined his appointment, and that his feelings should be hurt by being outranked. "If the authority," adds he, "which appointed me to the rank of second major in the army, will review the arrangement, and place General Knox before me, I will neither quit the service nor be dissatisfied." <sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XLV.

WASHINGTON TAXED ANEW WITH THE CARES OF OFFICE — CORRESPONDENCE WITH LAFAYETTE — A MARRIAGE AT MOUNT VERNON — APPOINTMENT OF A MINISTER TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC — WASHINGTON'S SURPRISE — HIS ACTIVITY ON HIS ESTATE — POLITICAL ANXIETIES — CONCERN ABOUT THE ARMY.

EARLY in November (1798) Washington left his retirement and repaired to Philadelphia, at the earnest request of the Secretary of War, to meet that public functionary and Major-Generals Hamilton and Pinckney, and make arrangements respecting the forces about to be raised. The Secretary had prepared a series of questions for their consideration, and others were suggested by Washington, all bearing upon the organization of the provisional army. Upon these Washington and the two major-generals were closely engaged for nearly five weeks, at great inconvenience and in a most inclement season. The result of their deliberations was reduced to form, and communicated to the Secretary in two letters drafted by Hamilton, and signed by the commander-in-chief. Not the

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Secretary of War.

least irksome of Washington's task, in his present position, was to wade through volumes of applications and recommendations for military appointments; a task which he performed with extreme assiduity, anxious to avoid the influence of favor or prejudice, and sensitively alive to the evil of improper selections.

As it was a part of the plan on which he had accepted the command of the army to decline the occupations of the office until circumstances should require his presence in the field; and as the season and weather rendered him impatient to leave Philadelphia, he gave the Secretary of War his views and plans for the charge and direction of military affairs, and then set out once more for Mount Vernon. The cares and concerns of office, however, followed him to his retreat. "It is not the time nor the attention only," writes he, "which the public duties I am engaged in require, but their bringing upon me applicants, recommenders of applicants, and seekers of information, none of whom, perhaps, are my acquaintances, with their servants and horses to aid in the consumption of my forage, and what to me is more valuable, my time, that I most regard; for a man in the country, nine miles from any house of entertainment, is differently situated from one in a city, where none of these inconveniences are felt."

In a letter, recently received from Lafayette, the latter spoke feelingly of the pleasure he experienced in conversing incessantly with his son George about Mount Vernon, its dear and venerated inhabitants, of the tender obligations, so profoundly felt, which he and his son had contracted towards him who had become a father to both.

In the conclusion of his letter, Lafayette writes that, from the information he had received, he was fully persuaded that the French Directory desired to be at peace with the United States. "The aristocratical party," adds he, "whose hatred of America dates from the commencement of the European revolution, and the English government, which, since the Declaration of Independence, have forgotten and forgiven nothing, will rejoice, I know, at the prospect of a rupture between two nations heretofore united in the cause of liberty, and will endeavor, by all the means in their power, to precipitate us into a war. . . . But you are there, my dear general, independent of all parties, venerated by all, and if, as I hope, your informant lead you to judge favorably of the disposition of the French government, your influence ought to prevent the breach from widening, and should insure a noble and durable reconciliation."



## *LIFE OF WASHINGTON.*

In his reply, December 25, Washington says: "You have expressed a wish worthy of the benevolence of your heart, that I would exert all my endeavors to avert the calamitous effects of rupture between our countries. Believe me, my dear friend, that no man can deprecate an event of this sort more than I should. . . . You add, in another place, that the Executive Directory are disposed to an accommodation of all differences. If they are sincere in this declaration, let them evidence it by actions; for words, unaccompanied therewith, will not be much regarded now. I would pledge myself that the government and people of the United States will meet them heart and hand at a fair negotiation; having no wish more ardent than to live in peace with all the world, provided they are suffered to remain undisturbed in their just rights."

"Of the politics of Europe," adds he, in another part of his letter, "I shall express no opinion, nor make any inquiry who is right or who is wrong. I wish well to all nations and to all men. My politics are plain and simple. I think every nation has a right to establish that form of government under which it conceives it may live most happy; provided it infringes no right, or is not dangerous to others; and that no governments ought to interfere with the internal concerns of another, except for the security of what is due to themselves."

Washington's national pride, however, had been deeply wounded by the indignities inflicted on his country by the French, and he doubted the propriety of entering into any fresh negotiations with them, unless overtures should be made on their part. As to any symptoms of an accommodation they might at present evince, he ascribed them to the military measures adopted by the United States, and thought those measures ought not to be relaxed.

We have spoken in a preceding chapter of a love affair growing up at Mount Vernon between Washington's nephew, Lawrence Lewis, and Miss Nelly Custis. The parties had since become engaged, to the general's great satisfaction, and their nuptials were celebrated at Mount Vernon on his birthday, the 22d of February (1799). Lawrence had recently received the commission of major of cavalry in the new army which was forming; and Washington made arrangements for settling the newly married couple near him on a part of Mount Vernon lands, which he had designated in his will to be bequeathed to Miss Nelly.

As the year opened, Washington continued to correspond with the Secretary of War and General Hamilton on the affairs

of the provisional army. The recruiting business went on slowly, with interruptions, and there was delay in furnishing commissions to the officers who had been appointed. Washington, who was not in the secrets of the cabinet, was at a loss to account for this apparent torpor. "If the augmented force," writes he to Hamilton, "was not intended as an *in terrorem* measure, the delay in recruiting it is unaccountable, and baffles all conjecture on reasonable grounds."

The fact was, that the military measures taken in America had really produced an effect on French policy. Efforts had been made by M. Talleyrand, through unofficial persons, to induce an amicable overture on the part of the United States. At length that wily minister had written to the French Secretary of Legation at the Hague, M. Pichon, intimating that whatever plenipotentiary the United States might send to France to put an end to the existing differences between the two countries, would be undoubtedly received with the respect due to the representative of a free, independent, and powerful nation. M. Pichon communicated a copy of this letter to Mr. William Vans Murray, the American minister in Holland, who forthwith transmitted it to his government. Mr. Adams caught at the chance for an extrication from his belligerent difficulties, and laid this letter before the Senate on the 18th of February, at the same time nominating Mr. Murray to be minister plenipotentiary to the French Republic.

Washington expressed his extreme surprise when the news of this unexpected event reached him. "But far, very far indeed," writes he, "was that surprise short of what I experienced the next day, when, by a very intelligent gentleman immediately from Philadelphia, I was informed that there had been no *direct* overture from the government of France to that of the United States for a negotiation; on the contrary, that M. Talleyrand was playing the same loose and roundabout game he had attempted the year before with our envoys; and which, as in that case, might mean any thing or nothing, as would subserve his purposes best."

Before the Senate decided on the nomination of Mr. Murray, two other persons were associated with him in the mission, namely, Oliver Ellsworth and Patrick Henry. The three envoys being confirmed, Mr. Murray was instructed by letter to inform the French Minister of Foreign Affairs of the fact, but to apprise him that his associate envoys would not embark for Europe until the Directory had given assurance, through their Minister for Foreign Affairs, that those envoys would be

received in proper form and treated with on terms of equality. Mr. Murray was directed at the same time to have no further informal communications with any French agent.

Mr. Henry declined to accept his appointment on account of ill health, and Mr. William Richardson Davie was ultimately substituted for him.

Throughout succeeding months, Washington continued to superintend from a distance the concerns of the army, as his ample and minute correspondence manifests; and he was at the same time earnestly endeavoring to bring the affairs of his rural domain into order. A sixteen years' absence from home, with short intervals, had, he said, deranged them considerably, so that it required all the time he could spare from the usual avocations of life to bring them into tune again. It was a period of incessant activity and toil, therefore, both mental and bodily. He was for hours in his study occupied with his pen, and for hours on horseback, riding the rounds of his extensive estate, visiting the various farms, and superintending and directing the works in operation. All this he did with unflinching vigor, though now in his sixty-seventh year.

Occasional reports of the sanguinary conflict that was going on in Europe would reach him in the quiet groves of Mount Vernon, and awaken his solicitude. "A more destructive sword," said he, "was never drawn, at least in modern times, than this war has produced. It is time to sheath it and give peace to mankind."<sup>1</sup>

Amid this strife and turmoil of the nations, he felt redoubled anxiety about the success of the mission to France. The great successes of the allies combined against that power; the changes in the Directory, and the rapidity with which every thing seemed verging towards a restoration of the monarchy, induced some members of the cabinet to advise a suspension of the mission; but Mr. Adams was not to be convinced or persuaded. Having furnished the commissioners with their instructions, he gave his final order for their departure, and they sailed in a frigate from Rhode Island on the 3d of November.

A private letter written by Washington shortly afterwards to the Secretary of War, bespeaks his apprehensions: "I have for some time past viewed the political concerns of the United States with an anxious and painful eye. They appear to me to be moving by hasty strides to a crisis; but in what it will result, that Being, who sees, foresees, and directs all things,

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to William Vans Murray.

alone can tell. The vessel is afloat, or very nearly so, and considering myself as a passenger only, I shall trust to the mariners (whose duty it is to watch) to steer it into a safe port."

His latest concern about the army was to give instructions for *hutting* the troops according to an idea originally suggested by Hamilton, and adopted in the Revolutionary war. "Although I had determined to take no charge of any military operations," writes he, "unless the troops should be called into the field, yet, under the present circumstances, and considering that the advanced season of the year will admit of no delay in providing winter quarters for the troops, I have willingly given my aid in that business, and shall never decline any assistance in my power, *when necessary*, to promote the good of the service."<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XLVI.

WASHINGTON DIGESTS A PLAN FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HIS ESTATE—HIS VIEWS IN REGARD TO A MILITARY ACADEMY—LETTER TO HAMILTON—HIS LAST HOURS—THE FUNERAL—THE WILL—ITS PROVISIONS IN REGARD TO HIS SLAVES—PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS ON HIS DEATH—CONCLUSION.

WINTER had now set in with occasional wind and rain and frost, yet Washington still kept up his active round of in-door and out-door avocations, as his diary records. He was in full health and vigor, dined out occasionally, and had frequent guests at Mount Vernon, and, as usual, was part of every day in the saddle, going the rounds of his estates, and, in his military phraseology, "visiting the outposts."

He had recently walked with his favorite nephew about the grounds, showing the improvements he intended to make, and had especially pointed out the spot where he purposed building a new family vault; the old one being damaged by the roots of trees which had overgrown it and caused it to leak. "This change," said he, "I shall make the first of all, for I may require it before the rest."

"When I parted from him," adds the nephew, "he stood on the steps of the front door, where he took leave of myself and another. . . . It was a bright frosty morning; he had taken

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<sup>1</sup> Washington's Writings, xi. 402.

his usual ride, and the clear healthy flush on his cheek, and his sprightly manner, brought the remark from both of us that we had never seen the general look so well. I have sometimes thought him decidedly the handsomest man I ever saw; and when in a lively mood, so full of pleasantry, so agreeable to all with whom he associated, that I could hardly realize he was the same Washington whose dignity awed all who approached him."<sup>1</sup>

For some time past Washington had been occupied in digesting a complete system on which his estate was to be managed for several succeeding years; specifying the cultivation of the several farms, with tables designating the rotations of the crops. It occupied thirty folio pages, and was executed with that clearness and method which characterized all his business papers. This was finished on the 10th of December, and was accompanied by a letter of that date to his manager or steward. It is a valuable document, showing the soundness and vigor of his intellect at this advanced stage of his existence, and the love of order that reigned throughout his affairs. "My greatest anxiety," said he on a previous occasion, "is to have all these concerns in such a clear and distinct form, that no reproach may attach itself to me when I have taken my departure for the land of spirits."<sup>2</sup>

It was evident, however, that full of health and vigor, he looked forward to his long-cherished hope, the enjoyment of a serene old age in this home of his heart.

According to his diary, the morning on which these voluminous instructions to his steward were dated was clear and calm, but the afternoon was lowering. The next day (11th) he notes that there was wind and rain, and "at night *a large circle round the moon.*"

The morning of the 12th was overcast. That morning he wrote a letter to Hamilton, heartily approving of a plan for a military academy, which the latter had submitted to the Secretary of War. "The establishment of an institution of this kind upon a respectable and extensive basis," observes he, "has ever been considered by me an object of primary importance to this country; and while I was in the chair of government I omitted no proper opportunity of recommending it in my public speeches and otherwise, to the attention of the legislature. But I never undertook to go into a detail of the organization of such an academy, leaving this task to others, whose

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<sup>1</sup> Paulding's *Life of Washington*, vol. II. p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *Letter to James McHenry. Writings*, xl. 407.

pursuit in the path of science and attention to the arrangement of such institutions, had better qualified them for the execution of it. . . . I sincerely hope that the subject will meet with due attention, and that the reasons for its establishment which you have clearly pointed out in your letter to the secretary, will prevail upon the legislature to place it upon a permanent and respectable footing." He closes his letter with an assurance of "very great esteem and regard," the last words he was ever to address to Hamilton.

About ten o'clock he mounted his horse, and rode out as usual to make the rounds of the estate. The ominous ring round the moon, which he had observed on the preceding night, proved a fatal portent. "About one o'clock," he notes, it began to snow, soon after to hail, and then turned to a settled cold rain. Having on an over-coat, he continued his ride without regarding the weather, and did not return to the house until after three.

His secretary approached him with letters to be franked, that they might be taken to the post-office in the evening. Washington franked the letters, but observed that the weather was too bad to send a servant out with them. Mr. Lear perceived that snow was hanging from his hair, and expressed fears that he had got wet; but he replied, "No, his great-coat had kept him dry." As dinner had been waiting for him he sat down to table without changing his dress. "In the evening," writes his secretary, "he appeared as well as usual."

On the following morning the snow was three inches deep and still falling, which prevented him from taking his usual ride. He complained of a sore throat, and had evidently taken cold the day before. In the afternoon the weather cleared up, and he went out on the grounds between the house and the river, to mark some trees which were to be cut down. A hoarseness which had hung about him through the day grew worse towards night, but he made light of it.

He was very cheerful in the evening, as he sat in the parlor with Mrs. Washington and Mr. Lear, amusing himself with the papers which had been brought from the post-office. When he met with any thing interesting or entertaining, he would read it aloud as well as his hoarseness would permit, or he listened and made occasional comments, while Mr. Lear read the debates of the Virginia Assembly.

On retiring to bed, Mr. Lear suggested that he should take something to relieve the cold. "No," replied he, "you know I never take any thing for a cold. Let it go as it came."

In the night he was taken extremely ill with ague and difficulty of breathing. Between two and three o'clock in the morning he awoke Mrs. Washington, who would have risen to call a servant; but he would not permit her, lest she should take cold. At daybreak, when the servant woman entered to make a fire, she was sent to call Mr. Lear. He found the general breathing with difficulty, and hardly able to utter a word intelligibly. Washington desired that Dr. Craik, who lived in Alexandria, should be sent for, and that in the mean time Rawlins, one of the overseers, should be summoned, to bleed him before the doctor could arrive.

A gargle was prepared for his throat, but whenever he attempted to swallow any of it, he was convulsed and almost suffocated. Rawlins made his appearance soon after sunrise, but when the general's arm was ready for the operation, became agitated. "Don't be afraid," said the general, as well as he could speak. Rawlins made an incision. "The orifice is not large enough," said Washington. The blood, however, ran pretty freely, and Mrs. Washington, uncertain whether the treatment was proper, and fearful that too much blood might be taken, begged Mr. Lear to stop it. When he was about to untie the string the general put up his hand to prevent him, and as soon as he could speak, murmured, "more — more;" but Mrs. Washington's doubts prevailed, and the bleeding was stopped, after about half a pint of blood had been taken. External applications were now made to the throat, and his feet were bathed in warm water, but without affording any relief.

His old friend, Dr. Craik, arrived between eight and nine, and two other physicians, Drs. Dick and Brown, were called in. Various remedies were tried, and additional bleeding, but all of no avail.

"About half past four o'clock," writes Mr. Lear, "he desired me to call Mrs. Washington to his bedside, when he requested her to go down into his room and take from his desk two wills, which she would find there, and bring them to him, which she did. Upon looking at them, he gave her one, which he observed was useless, as being superseded by the other, and desired her to burn it, which she did, and took the other and put it into her closet.

"After this was done, I returned to his bedside and took his hand. He said to me: 'I find I am going, my breath cannot last long. I believed from the first, that the disorder would prove fatal. Do you arrange and record all my late military

letters and papers. Arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than any one else; and let Mr. Rawlins finish recording my other letters which he has begun.' I told him this should be done. He then asked if I recollected any thing which it was essential for him to do, as he had but a very short time to continue with us. I told him that I could recollect nothing, but that I hoped he was not so near his end. He observed, smiling, that he certainly was, and that, as it was the debt which we must all pay, he looked to the event with perfect resignation."

In the course of the afternoon he appeared to be in great pain and distressed from the difficulty of breathing, and frequently changed his posture in the bed. Mr. Lear endeavored to raise him and turn him with as much ease as possible. "I am afraid I fatigue you too much," the general would say. Upon being assured to the contrary, "Well," observed he gratefully, "it is a debt we must pay to each other, and I hope when you want aid of this kind you will find it."

His servant, Christopher, had been in the room during the day, and almost the whole time on his feet. The general noticed it in the afternoon, and kindly told him to sit down.

About five o'clock his old friend, Dr. Craik, came again into the room, and approached the bedside. "Doctor," said the general, "I die hard, but I am not afraid to go. I believed, from my first attack, that I should not survive it—my breath cannot last long." The doctor pressed his hand in silence, retired from the bedside, and sat by the fire absorbed in grief.

Between five and six the other physicians came in, and he was assisted to sit up in his bed. "I feel I am going," said he; "I thank you for your attentions, but I pray you to take no more trouble about me; let me go off quietly; I cannot last long." He lay down again; all retired excepting Dr. Craik. The general continued uneasy and restless, but without complaining, frequently asking what hour it was.

Further remedies were tried without avail in the evening. He took whatever was offered him, did as he was desired by the physicians, and never uttered sigh or complaint.

"About ten o'clock," writes Mr. Lear, "he made several attempts to speak to me before he could effect it. At length he said, 'I am just going. Have me decently buried, and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than three days after I am dead.' I bowed assent, for I could not speak. He then looked at me again and said, 'Do you understand me?' I replied, 'Yes.' 'Tis well," said he.



"About ten minutes before he expired (which was between ten and eleven o'clock) his breathing became easier. He lay quietly; he withdrew his hand from mine and felt his own pulse. I saw his countenance change. I spoke to Dr. Craik, who sat by the fire. He came to the bedside. The general's hand fell from his wrist. I took it in mine and pressed it to my bosom. Dr. Craik put his hands over his eyes, and he expired without a struggle or a sigh.

"While we were fixed in silent grief, Mrs. Washington, who was seated at the foot of the bed, asked with a firm and collected voice, 'Is he gone?' I could not speak, but held up my hand as a signal that he was no more. 'Tis well,' said she in the same voice. 'All is now over; I shall soon follow him; I have no more trials to pass through.' "

We add from Mr. Lear's account a few particulars concerning the funeral. The old family vault on the estate had been opened, the rubbish cleared away, and a door made to close the entrance, which before had been closed with brick. The funeral took place on the 18th of December. About eleven o'clock the people of the neighborhood began to assemble. The corporation of Alexandria, with the militia and Free Masons of the place, and eleven pieces of cannon, arrived at a later hour. A schooner was stationed off Mount Vernon to fire minute guns.

About three o'clock the procession began to move, passing out through the gate at the left wing of the house, proceeding round in front of the lawn and down to the vault, on the right wing of the house; minute guns being fired at the time. The troops, horse and foot, formed the escort; then came four of the clergy. Then the general's horse, with his saddle, holsters, and pistols, led by two grooms in black. The body was borne by the Free Masons and officers; several members of the family and old friends, among the number Dr. Craik, and some of the Fairfaxes, followed as chief mourners. The corporation of Alexandria and numerous private persons closed the procession. The Rev. Mr. Davis read the funeral service at the vault, and pronounced a short address; after which the Masons performed their ceremonies, and the body was deposited in the vault.

Such were the obsequies of Washington, simple and modest, according to his own wishes; all confined to the grounds of Mount Vernon, which, after forming the poetical dream of his life, had now become his final resting-place.

On opening the will which he had handed to Mrs. Washington shortly before his death, it was found to have been carefully

drawn up by himself in the preceding July; and by an act in conformity with his whole career, one of its first provisions directed the emancipation of his slaves on the decease of his wife. It had long been his earnest wish that the slaves held by him *in his own right* should receive their freedom during his life, but he had found that it would be attended with insuperable difficulties on account of their intermixture by marriage with the "dower negroes," whom it was not in his power to manumit under the tenure by which they were held.

With provident benignity he also made provision in his will for such as were to receive their freedom under this devise, but who, from age, bodily infirmities, or infancy, might be unable to support themselves, and he expressly forbade, under any pretence whatsoever, the sale or transportation out of Virginia, of any slave of whom he might die possessed. Though born and educated a slaveholder, this was all in consonance with feelings, sentiments and principles which he had long entertained.

In a letter to Mr. John F. Mercer, in September, 1786, he writes, "I never mean, unless some particular circumstances should compel me to it, to possess another slave by purchase, it being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law." And eleven years afterwards, in August, 1797, he writes to his nephew, Lawrence Lewis, in a letter which we have had in our hands, "I wish from my soul that the legislature of this State could see the policy of a gradual abolition of slavery. It might prevent much future mischief."

A deep sorrow spread over the nation on hearing that Washington was no more. Congress, which was in session, immediately adjourned for the day. The next morning it was resolved that the Speaker's chair be shrouded with black: that the members and officers of the House wear black during the session, and that a joint committee of both Houses be appointed to consider on the most suitable manner of doing honor to the memory of the man, "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens."

Public testimonials of grief and reverence were displayed in every part of the Union. Nor were these sentiments confined to the United States. When the news of Washington's death reached England, Lord Bridport, who had command of a British fleet of nearly sixty sail of the line, lying at Torbay, lowered his flag half-mast, every ship following the example; and Bonaparte, First Consul of France, on announcing his

death to the army, ordered that black crape should be suspended from all the standards and flags throughout the public service for ten days.

In the preceding volumes of our work, we have traced the career of Washington from early boyhood to his elevation to the presidential chair. It was an elevation he had neither sought nor wished; for when the independence of his country was achieved, the modest and cherished desire of his heart had been "to live and die a private citizen on his own farm;"<sup>1</sup> and he had shaped out for himself an ideal elysium in his beloved shades of Mount Vernon. But power sought him in his retirement. The weight and influence of his name and character were deemed all essential to complete his work; to set the new government in motion, and conduct it through its first perils and trials. With unfeigned reluctance he complied with the imperative claims of his country, and accepted the power thus urged upon him; advancing to its exercise with diffidence, and aiming to surround himself with men of the highest talent and information whom he might consult in emergency; but firm and strong in the resolve in all things to act as his conscience told him was "right as it respected his God, his country, and himself." For he knew no divided fidelity, no separate obligation; his most sacred duty to himself was his highest duty to his country and his God.

In treating of his civil administration in this closing volume, we have endeavored to show how truly he adhered to this resolve, and with what inflexible integrity and scrupulous regard to the public weal he discharged his functions. In executing our task, we have not indulged in discussions of temporary questions of controverted policy which agitated the incipient establishment of our government, but have given his words and actions as connected with those questions, and as illustrative of his character. In this volume, as in those which treat of his military career, we have avoided rhetorical amplification and embellishments, and all gratuitous assumptions, and have sought by simple and truthful details, to give his character an opportunity of developing itself, and of manifesting those fixed principles and that noble consistency which reigned alike throughout his civil and his military career.

The character of Washington may want some of those poetical elements which dazzle and delight the multitude, but it

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<sup>1</sup> Writings, ix., 412.

possessed fewer inequalities, and a rarer union of virtues than perhaps ever fell to the lot of one man. Prudence, firmness, sagacity, moderation, an overruling judgment, an immovable justice, courage that never faltered, patience that never wearied, truth that disdained all artifice, magnanimity without alloy. It seems as if Providence had endowed him in a pre-eminent degree with the qualities requisite to fit him for the high destiny he was called upon to fulfil—to conduct a momentous revolution which was to form an era in the history of the world, and to inaugurate a new and untried government, which, to use his own words, was to lay the foundation “for the enjoyment of much purer civil liberty, and greater public happiness, than have hitherto been the portion of mankind.”

The fame of Washington stands apart from every other in history; shining with a truer lustre and a more benignant glory. With us his memory remains a national property, where all sympathies throughout our widely-extended and diversified empire meet in unison. Under all dissensions and amid all the storms of party, his precepts and example speak to us from the grave with a paternal appeal; and his name—by all revered—forms a universal tie of brotherhood—a watchword of our Union.

“It will be the duty of the historian and the sage of all nations,” writes an eminent British statesman (Lord Brougham), “to let no occasion pass of commemorating this illustrious man, and until time shall be no more, will a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and virtue, be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington.”

## APPENDIX.

### I.

#### PORTRAITS OF WASHINGTON.

[The following notices of the various representations of Washington, which have been prepared by the publisher for the illustrated edition of this work, are kindly furnished by Mr. H. T. TUCKERMAN, from a volume which he has now in press.]

THE earliest portraits of Washington are more interesting, perhaps, as memorials than as works of art; and we can easily imagine that associations endeared them to his old comrades. The dress (blue coat, scarlet facings, and underclothes) of the first portrait, by Peale, and the youthful face, make it suggestive of the first experience of the future commander, when exchanging the surveyor's implements for the colonel's commission, he bivouacked in the wilderness of Ohio, the leader of a motley band of hunters, provincials and savages, to confront wily Frenchmen, cut forest roads, and encounter all the perils of Indian ambush, inclement skies, undisciplined followers, famine, and woodland skirmish. It recalls his calm authority and providential escape amid the dismay of Braddock's defeat, and his pleasant sensation at the first whistling of bullets in the weary march to Fort Necessity. To CHARLES WILSON PEALE, we owe this precious relic of the chieftain's youth. His own career partook of the vicissitudes and was impressed with the spirit of the revolutionary era; a captain of volunteers at the battles of Trenton and Germantown, and a State representative of Pennsylvania, a favorite pupil of West, an ingenious mechanician, and a warrior, he always cherished the instinct and the faculty for art; and even amid the bustle and duties of the camp, never failed to seize auspicious intervals of leisure, to depict his brother officers. This portrait was executed in 1772, and is now at Arlington House.

The resolution of Congress by which a portrait by this artist was ordered, was passed before the occupation of Philadelphia. Its progress marks the vicissitudes of the revolutionary struggle; commenced in the gloomy winter and half-famished encampment at Valley Forge, in 1778, the battles of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth intervened before its completion. At the last place Washington suggested that the view from the window of the farm-house opposite to which he was sitting would form a desirable background. Peale adopted the idea, and represented Monmouth Court House and a party of Hessians under guard, marching out of it.<sup>1</sup> The picture was finished at Princeton, and Nassau Hall is a

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<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter of Titian R. Peale to George Livermore, Esq.

prominent object in the background; but Congress adjourned without making an appropriation, and it remained in the artist's hands. Lafayette desired a copy for the King of France; and Peale executed one in 1779, which was sent to Paris; but the misfortunes of the royal family occasioned its sale, and it became the property of the Count de Menou, who brought it again to this country and presented it to the National Institute, where it is now preserved. Chapman made two copies at a thousand dollars each; and Dr. Craik, one of the earliest and warmest personal friends of Washington, their commissions as officers in the French war having been signed on the same day (1754), declared it a most faithful likeness of him as he appeared in the prime of his life.<sup>1</sup>

There is a tradition in the Peale family, honorably represented through several generations, by public spirit and artistic gifts, that intelligence of one of the most important triumphs of the American arms was received by Washington in a despatch he opened while sitting to Wilson Peale for a miniature for his wife, who was also present. The scene occurred one fine summer afternoon; and there is something attractive to the fancy in the association of this group quietly occupied in one of the most beautiful of the arts of peace, and in a commemorative art destined to gratify conjugal love and a nation's pride, with the progress of a war and the announcement of a victory fraught with that nation's liberty and that leader's eternal renown.

The characteristic traits of Peale's portraits of Washington now at the National Institute and Arlington House, and the era of our history and of Washington's life they embalm, make them doubly valuable in a series of pictorial illustrations, each of which, independent of the degree of professional skill exhibited, is essential to our Washingtonian gallery. Before Trumbull and Stuart had caught from the living man his aspect in maturity and age—the form knit to athletic proportions by self-denial and activity, and clad in the garb of rank and war, and the countenance open with truth and grave with thought, yet rounded with the contour and ruddy with the glow of early manhood—was thus genially delineated by the hand of a comrade, and in the infancy of native art. Of the fourteen portraits by Peale, that exhibiting Washington as a Virginia colonel in the colonial force of Great Britain, is the only entire portrait before the Revolution extant.<sup>2</sup> One was painted for the college of New Jersey, at Princeton, in 1780, to occupy a frame in which a portrait of George the Third had been destroyed by a cannon ball during the battle at that place on the 3d of January, 1777. It still remains in the possession of the College, and was saved fortunately from the fire which a few years ago consumed Nassau Hall. Peale's last portrait of Washington, executed in 1783, he retained until his death, and two years since, it was sold with the rest of the collection known as the "Peale Gallery," at Philadelphia. There is a pencil sketch also by this artist, framed with the wood

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<sup>1</sup> PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 4. — His Excellency General Washington set off from this city to join the army in New Jersey. During the course of his short stay, the only relief he has enjoyed from service since he first entered it, he has been honored with every mark of esteem, etc. The Council of this State, being desirous of having his picture in full length, requested his sitting for that purpose, which he politely complied with, and a striking likeness was taken by Mr. Peale, of this city. The portrait is to be placed in the council chamber. Don Juan Marralles, the minister of France, has ordered five copies, four of which, we hear, are to be sent abroad. — *Penn. Packet*, February 11, 1779. Peale's first portrait was executed for Colonel Alexander; his last is now in the Bryan Gallery, New York. He painted one in 1776 for John Hancock, and besides that for New Jersey officers for Pennsylvania and Maryland.

<sup>2</sup> See frontispiece to vol. I.

of the tree in front of the famous Chew's house, around which centred the battle of Germantown.<sup>1</sup>

A few octogenarians in the city of brotherly love, used to speak, not many years since, of a diminutive family, the head of which manifested the sensitive temperament, if not the highest capabilities of artistic genius. This was ROBERT EDGE PINE. He brought to America the earliest cast of the Venus de Medici, which was privately exhibited to the select few—the manners and morals of the Quaker city forbidding its exposure to the common eye. He was considered a superior colorist, and was favorably introduced into society in Philadelphia by his acknowledged sympathy for the American cause, and by a grand project such as was afterwards partially realized by Trumbull; that of a series of historical paintings, illustrative of the American Revolution, to embrace original portraits of the leaders, both civil and military, in that achievement, including the statesmen who were chiefly instrumental in framing the Constitution and organizing the government. He brought a letter of introduction to the father of the late Judge Hopkinson, whose portrait he executed, and its vivid tints and correct resemblance still attest to his descendants the ability of the painter. He left behind him in London, creditable portraits of George the Second, Garrick, and the Duke of Northumberland. In the intervals of his business as a teacher of drawing and a votary of portraiture in general, he collected, from time to time, a large number of "distinguished heads," although, as in the case of Ceracchi, the epoch and country were unfavorable to his ambitious project; of these portraits, the heads of General Gates, Charles Carrol, Baron Steuben, and Washington, are the best known and most highly prized. Pine remained three weeks at Mount Vernon, and his portrait bequeathes some features with great accuracy; artists find in it certain merits not discoverable in those of a later date; it has the permanent interest of a representation from life, by a painter of established reputation; yet its tone is cold and its effect unimpressive beside the more bold and glowing pencil of Stuart. It has repose and dignity. In his letter to Washington, asking his co-operation in the design he meditated, Pine says, "I have been some time at Annapolis painting the portraits of patriots, legislators, heroes and beauties, in order to adorn my large picture;" and he seems to have commenced his enterprise with sanguine hopes of one day accomplishing his object, which, however, it was reserved for a native artist eventually to complete. That his appeal to Washington was not neglected, however, is evident from an encouraging allusion to Pine and his scheme, in the correspondence of the former. "Mr. Pine," he says, "has met a favorable reception in this country, and may, I conceive, command as much business as he pleases. He is now preparing materials for historical representations of the most important events of the war."<sup>2</sup> Pine's picture is in the possession of the Hopkinson family at Philadelphia. The fac-simile of Washington's letter proves that it was taken in 1785. A large copy was purchased at Montreal, in 1817, by the late Henry Brevoort, of New York, and is now in the possession of his son, J. Carson Brevoort, at Bedford, L.I.

The profile likeness of Washington by SHARPLESS, is a valuable item of the legacy which Art has bequeathed of those noble and benign features; he evidently bestowed upon it his greatest skill, and there is no

<sup>1</sup> "The editor of the Cincinnati Enquirer was lately shown a pencil sketch of General Washington, taken from life by Charles Wilson Peale, in the year 1777. It was framed from a part of the elm-tree then standing in front of Chew's house, on the Germantown battle-ground, and the frame was made by a son of Dr. Craley, of revolutionary fame."

<sup>2</sup> Sparks' Writings of Washington.

more correct facial outline of the immortal subject in existence; a disciple of Lavater would probably find it the most available side-view for physiognomical inference; it is remarkably adapted to the burin, and has been once, at least, adequately engraved; it also has the melancholy attraction of being the last portrait of Washington taken from life.

One of Canova's fellow-workmen, in the first years of his artistic life, was a melancholy enthusiast, whose thirst for the ideal was deepened by a morbid tenacity of purpose and sensitiveness of heart—a form of character peculiar to Italy; in its voluptuous phase illustrated by Petrarch, in its stoical by Alfieri, and in its combination of patriotic and tender sentiments by Foscolo's "Letters of Jacopo Ortis." The political confusion that reigned in Europe for a time, seriously interfered with the pursuit of art; and this was doubtless a great motive with GIUSEPPE CERACCHI for visiting America; but not less inciting was the triumph of freedom, of which the land had recently become the scene—a triumph that so enlisted the sympathies and fired the imagination of the republican sculptor, that he designed a grand national monument, commemorative of American Independence, and sought the patronage of the newly organized government in its behalf. Washington, individually, favored his design, and the model of the proposed work received the warm approval of competent judges; but taste for art, especially for grand monumental statuary, was quite undeveloped on this side of the Atlantic, and the recipient of Papal orders found little encouragement in a young republic, too busy in laying the foundation of her civil polity, to give much thought to any memorials of her nascent glory. It was, however, but a question of time. His purpose is even now in the process of achievement. Washington's native State voluntarily undertook the enterprise for which the general government, in its youth, was inadequate; and it was auspiciously reserved for a native artist, and a single member of the original confederacy, to embody, in a style worthy of more than Italian genius, the grand conception of a representative monument, with Washington in a colossal equestrian statue as the centre, and the Virginian patriots and orators of the Revolution, grouped around his majestic figure. Ceracchi, however, in aid of his elaborate project, executed the only series of marble portraiture from life of the renowned founders of the national government: his busts of Hamilton, Jay, Trumbull, and Governor George Clinton, were long the prominent ornaments of the Academy of Fine Arts, in New York; the latter, especially, was remarkable, both in regard to its resemblance to the original, and as a work of art. His most important achievement, however, was a bust of Washington, generally considered the most perfect representation of the man and the hero combined, after Stuart's and Houdon's masterpieces. It is in the heroic style, with a fillet. The fate of this valuable effigy was singular. It was purchased by the Spanish ambassador, as a gift to the Prince of Peace, then at the height of his power at Madrid; before the bust reached Spain, Godoy was exiled, and the minister recalled, who, on his arrival, transferred it, unpacked, to Richard Meade, Esq., of Philadelphia, in whose family it remained until two years ago, when, at the administrator's sale of that gentleman's fine collection of paintings, it was purchased by Governor Kemble, and can now be seen at his hospitable mansion on the banks of the Hudson.

The zeal of Ceracchi in his cherished purpose, is indicated by the assurance he gave Dr. Hugh Williamson—the historian of North Carolina, and author of the earliest work on the American climate, and one of the first advocates of the canal policy—when inviting him to sit for his bust—that he did not pay him the compliment in order to secure his



vote for the national monument, but only to perpetuate the "features of the American Cato." With characteristic emphasis, the honest doctor declined, on the ground that posterity would not care for his lineaments; adding that, "if he were capable of being lured into the support of any scheme whatever, against his conviction of right, wood, and not stone, ought to be the material of his image."<sup>1</sup>

Baffled, as Ceracchi ultimately was, in the realization of hopes inspired alike by his ambition as a sculptor and his love of republican institutions, he carried to Europe the proud distinction of having taken the initiative in giving an enduring shape to the revered and then unfamiliar features of Washington. He executed two busts, one colossal, a cast of which was long in the New York Academy of Fine Arts. Impoverished, the darling scheme of his life frustrated in America, and his own patriotic hopes crushed by the victories of Bonaparte in Italy, and his rapid advances towards imperial sway, the enthusiastic artist brooded, with intense disappointment, over the contrast between the fresh and exuberant national life, of which he had partaken here, and the vassalage to which Europe was again reduced. Napoleon and Washington stood revealed, as it were, side by side—the selfish aggrandizement of the one who trampled on humanity under the prestige of military fame, and the magnanimity of the other, content to be the immaculate agent of a free people, after sacrificing all for their welfare. Imbued with the principles and a witness of the self-control which consummated our revolutionary triumph, Ceracchi beheld with an impatience that caution only restrained, the steady and unscrupulous encroachment of Bonaparte on all that is sacred in nationality and freedom. Somewhat of the deep indignation and the sacrificial will that nerved the hand of Charlotte Corday, somewhat of the fanaticism that moved the student-assassin of Kotzebue, and, perhaps, a little of the vengeful ire of Ravaiillac, at length kindled the Italian blood of the sculptor. He became one of the most determined secret conspirators against the now established usurper. The memoirs of the time speak of his "exaggerated notions," his disdain of life, of the profound gloom that often clouded his soul, of the tears he alternately shed of admiration at the brilliant exploits of the conqueror, and of grief at the wrongs inflicted on the beautiful land of his nativity. "This man," says one fair chronicler of those exciting times, "has a soul of fire." A plot which is stigmatized as nefarious, and, according to rumor, was of the Fieschi stamp, aimed at the life of Bonaparte, when First Consul, was finally discovered, and Ceracchi became legally compromised as one of those pledged to its execution. He was tried, boldly acknowledged his murderous intention, and was condemned to death. Among his fellow-conspirators were two or three republican artists with whom he had become intimate at Rome; they were arrested at the opera, and daggers found upon their persons: the plot is designated in the annals of the time as the Arena Conspiracy. Ceracchi was a Corsican by birth; and, from an ardent admirer, thus became the deadly foe of his great countryman; and the gifted artist, the enthusiastic republican, the vindictive patriot, and the sculptor of Washington—perished on the scaffold.

His bust gives Washington a Roman look, but has been declared to exhibit more truly the expression of the mouth than any other work. Those of Hamilton and Governor Clinton, by this artist, are deemed, by their respective families, as correct as portraits, as they are superior as pieces of statuary. And this is presumptive evidence in favor of the

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hosack's Essays.

belief that Ceracchi's attachment to the heroic style did not seriously interfere with the general truth of his portraiture.

The design of a statue was, therefore, only realized on the arrival of Houdon. The history of this sculptor is a striking contrast to that of Ceracchi. A native of Versailles, he flourished at an epoch remarkably prolific of original characters in all departments of letters and art. Many of these, especially his own countrymen, have been represented by his chisel. He enjoyed a long and prosperous existence, having survived the taste he initiated, and the friends of his youth, but maintaining a most creditable reputation to his death, which occurred in his eighty-eighth year. He rose to distinction by a new style, which appears to have exhibited, according to the subject, a remarkable simplicity on the one hand, and elaboration on the other. An over-estimate of the effect of details marred his more labored creations; but he had a faculty of catching the air, and a taste in generalizing the conception, both of a real and fanciful subject, which manifested unusual genius. There was an individuality about his best works that won attention and established his fame. Of the ideal kind, two were the subjects of much critical remark, though for different reasons. One of them was intended to exhibit the effect of cold—an idea almost too melodramatic and physical for sculpture, but quite in character for a Frenchman, aiming, even in his severe and limited art, at theatrical effect. The other was a statue of Diana—the object of numerous *bon mots*, first, because it was ordered by Catharine of Russia, who, it was generally thought, had no special affinity with the chaste goddess; and, secondly, on account of the voluptuous character given it by the artist, which procured for his Diana the name of Venus. Houdon's bust of Voltaire gained him renown at once in this department of his pursuit, and is a memorable example of his success. How various the characters whose similitudes are perpetuated by his chisel—Gluck and Buffon, Rousseau and D'Alembert, Mirabeau and Washington! Jefferson, in behalf of the State of Virginia, arranged with Houdon at Paris, to undertake the latter commission; and he accompanied Dr. Franklin to the United States. He remained at Mount Vernon long enough to execute a model of Washington's head, and familiarize himself with every detail of his features and the traits of his natural language; but that implicit fidelity, now evident in the busts of our own leading sculptors, was not then in vogue, and the artists of the day were rather adepts in idealizing than in precise imitation of nature; therefore, the result of Houdon's labors, though, in general, satisfactory, cannot be used with the mathematical exactitude, as a guide, which greater attention to minutiae would have secured. There is a sketch by Stuart indicating some minute errors in the outline of Houdon's bust. On leaving, he presented Washington with the bas-relief which used to hang over his chair in the library at Mount Vernon. He completed the statue after his return to Paris, and in the diary of Gouverneur Morris, is an entry noting his attendance at the artist's studio, to stand for the figure of his illustrious friend, whom, before he became corpulent, he is said to have resembled. He alludes to the circumstance as "being the humble employment of a mannikin;" and adds, "this is literally taking the advice of St. Paul, to be all things to all men." The original cast of the head of this statue is still at Mount Vernon, and the statue itself is the cherished ornament of the Capitol at Richmond, and has been declared, by one of Washington's biographers, to be "as perfect a resemblance, in face and figure, as the art admits;" while, on the other hand, a critic of large and studious observation, who was well acquainted with the appearance of the original, says that, as a

likeness, the head is inferior to Ceracchi's bust. The costume is authentic, that Washington wore as commander-in-chief; it has been assailed with the usual arguments — its want of classical effect, and its undignified style; but less conservative reasoners applaud the truth of the drapery, and the work is endeared as a faithful and unique representation of the man — the only one from life, bequeathed by the art of the sculptor. "Judge Marshall," says Dr. Sparks in a letter to us, "once told me that the head of Houdon's statue at Richmond, seen at a point somewhat removed towards the side, from the front, presented as perfect a resemblance of the living man as he could conceive possible in marble."

REMBRANDT PEALE, when quite young, became the companion of his father's artistic labors. In compliment to the latter, Washington sat for a likeness to the novice of eighteen, who says the honor agitated more than it inspired him, and he solicited his father's intercession and countenance on the memorable occasion. Of the precise value of his original sketch it is difficult to form an accurate opinion, but the mature result of his efforts to produce a portrait of Washington has attained a high and permanent fame. He availed himself of the best remembered points, and always worked with Houdon's bust before him. This celebrated picture is the favorite portrait of a large number of amateurs. It is more dark and mellowed in tint, more elaborately worked up, and, in some respects, more effectively arranged, than any of its predecessors. Enclosed in an oval of well-imitated stone fretwork, vigorous in execution, rich in color, the brow, eyes, and mouth, full of character — altogether it is a striking and impressive delineation. That it was thus originally regarded we may infer from the unanimous resolution of the United States Senate, in 1832, appropriating two thousand dollars for its purchase, and from the numerous copies of the original, in military costume, belonging to the artist, which have been and are still ordered. Rembrandt Peale is said to be the only living artist who ever saw Washington. In the pamphlet which he issued to authenticate the work, we find the cordial testimony to its fidelity and other merits of Lawrence Lewis, the eldest nephew of Washington: of the late venerable John Vaughan, of Bishop White, Rufus King, Charles Carroll, Edward Livingston, General Smith, Dr. James Thatcher, and Judge Cranch. Chief Justice Marshall says of it: "It is more Washington himself than any portrait I have ever seen;" and Judge Peters explains his approval by declaring "I judge from its effect on my heart."<sup>1</sup>

No artist enjoyed the opportunities of COLONEL TRUMBULL as the portrayer of Washington. As aide-de-camp he was familiar with his appearance in the prime of his life and its most exciting era. At the commencement of the revolutionary struggle, this officer was among the most active, and essentially promoted the secure retreat of the American forces, under General Sullivan, from Rhode Island; he, therefore, largely partook of the spirit of those days, came freely under the influence of Washington's character as it pervaded the camp, and had ample time and occasion to observe the commander-in-chief in his military aspect, and in social intercourse, on horseback, in the field, and at the hospital board, in the councils of war, when silently meditating his great work, when oppressed with anxiety, animated by hope, or under the influence of those quick and strong feelings he so early learned to subdue. After Trumbull's resignation, and when far away from the scene of Washing-

<sup>1</sup> See frontispiece to vol. iii.

ton's glory, he painted his head from recollection, so distinctly was every feature and expression impressed upon his mind. In the autumn of 1789 he returned from Europe, and began his sketches of the chiefs and statesmen of the Revolution, afterwards embodied in the pictures that adorn the Rotunda of the Capitol, and the originals of which, invaluable for their authenticity, may now be seen in the gallery at New Haven. Here is preserved the most spirited portrait of Washington that exists—the only reflection of him as a soldier of freedom worthy of the name, drawn from life. The artist's own account of this work is given in his memoirs: "In 1792 I was again in Philadelphia, and there painted the portrait of General Washington, now placed in the gallery at New Haven, the best, certainly, of those that I painted, and the best, in my estimation, which exists in heroic and military character. The city of Charleston, S. C., instructed Mr. W. R. Smith, one of the representatives of South Carolina, to employ me to paint for them a portrait of the great man, and I undertook it *con amore*, as the commission was unlimited, meaning to give his military character at the most sublime moment of its exertion—the evening previous to the battle of Trenton, when, viewing the vast superiority of his approaching enemy, the impossibility of again crossing the Delaware or retreating down the river, he conceives the plan of returning by a night march into the country from which he had been driven, thus cutting off the enemy's communication and destroying the depot of stores at Brunswick." There is a singular felicity in this choice of the moment to represent Washington, for it combines all the most desirable elements of expression characteristic of the man. It is a moment, not of brilliant achievement, but of intrepid conception, when the dignity of thought is united with the sternness of resolve, and the enthusiasm of a daring experiment kindles the habitual mood of self-control in an unwonted glow. As the artist unfolded his design to Washington, the memory of that eventful night thrilled him anew; he rehearsed the circumstances, described the scene, and his face was lighted up as the memorable crisis in his country's fate and his own career was renewed before him. He spoke of the desperate chance, the wild hope, and the hazardous but fixed determination of that hour; and, as the gratified painter declares, "looked the scene." "The result," he says, "was, in my own opinion, eminently successful, and the general was satisfied." Whether the observer of the present day accedes to the opinion, that he "happily transferred to the canvas the lofty expression of his animated countenance, the resolve to conquer or perish;" whether the picture comes up to his preconceived ideal of the heroic view of Washington or not, he must admit that it combines great apparent fidelity, with more spirit and the genius of action, than all other portraits.<sup>1</sup>

Although not so familiar as Stuart's, numerous good copies of Trumbull's Washington, some from his own, and others by later pencils, have rendered it almost as well known in this country. Contemporaries give it a decided preference; it recalled the leader of the American armies, the man who was "first in the hearts of his countrymen," ere age relaxed the facial muscles and modified the decisive lines of the mouth; it was associated in their minds with the indignant rebuke at Monmouth, the brilliant surprise at Trenton, and the heroic patience at Valley Forge; it was the Washington of their youth who led the armies of freedom, the modest, the brave, the vigilant and triumphant chief. Ask an elderly Knickerbocker what picture will give you a good idea of Washington, and

<sup>1</sup> See frontispiece to vol. II.

he will confidently refer you, as the testimony his father has taught him, to Trumbull's portrait in the City Hall. When Lafayette first beheld a copy of this picture, in a gentleman's house in New Jersey, on his visit to this country, a few years before his death, he uttered an exclamation of delight at its resemblance. An excellent copy, by Vanderlyn, adorns the United States House of Representatives, for the figure in which, George B. Rapalye, Esq., a highly respected citizen of New York, stood with exemplary patience, for many days, wearing a coat, perhaps the first specimen of American broadcloth, that had been worn by Washington. The air of the figure is as manly and elegant, the look as dignified and commanding, and the brow as practical in its moulding, as in Stuart's representation of him at a more advanced period; but the face is less round, the profile more aquiline, the complexion has none of the fresh and ruddy hue, and the hair is not yet blanched. It is altogether a keener, more active, less thoughtful, but equally graceful and dignified man. He stands in an easy attitude, in full uniform, with his hand on his horse's neck; and the most careless observer, though ignorant of the subject, would recognize, at a glance, the image of a brave man, an intelligent officer, and an honorable gentleman. The excellent engraving of Durand has widely disseminated Trumbull's spirited head of Washington.

Although the concurrent testimony of those best fitted to judge, give the palm to Trumbull's portrait, now in the gallery at New Haven, as the most faithful likeness of Washington in his prime, this praise seems to refer rather to the general expression and air, than to the details of the face. Trumbull often failed in giving a satisfactory likeness; he never succeeded in rendering the complexion, as is obvious by comparing that of his picture in the New York City Hall with any or all of Stuart's heads; the former is yellow, and gives the idea of a bilious temperament, while the latter, in every instance, have the florid, ruddy tint, which, we are assured, was characteristic of Washington, and indicative of his active habits, constant exposure to the elements, and Saxon blood. The best efforts of Trumbull were his first careful sketches; he never could elaborate with equal effect; the collection of small, original heads, from which his historical pictures were drawn, are invaluable, as the most authentic resemblances in existence of our revolutionary heroes. They have a genuine look and a spirited air, seldom discoverable in the enlarged copies.

"Washington," says Trumbull, in describing the picture, "is represented standing on elevated ground, on the south side of the Creek at Trenton, a little below the stone bridge and mill. He has a reconnoitring glass in his hand, with which he is supposed to have been examining the strength of the hostile army, pouring into and occupying Trenton, which he had just abandoned at their appearance; and, having ascertained their great superiority, as well in numbers as discipline, he is supposed to have been meditating how to avoid the apparently impending ruin, and to have just formed the plan which he executed during the night. This led to the splendid success at Princeton on the following morning; and in the estimation of the great Frederic, placed his military character on a level with that of the greatest commanders of ancient or modern times. Behind, and near, an attendant holds his horse. Every minute article of dress, down to the buttons and spurs, and the buckles and straps of the horse furniture, were carefully painted from the different objects."

The gentleman who was the medium of this commission to Trumbull,

praised his work; but aware of the popular sentiment, declared it not calm and peaceful enough to satisfy those for whom it was intended. With reluctance, the painter asked Washington, overwhelmed as he was with official duty, to sit for another portrait, which represents him in his every-day aspect, and, therefore, better pleased the citizens of Charleston. "Keep this picture," said Washington to the artist, speaking of the first experiment, "and finish it to your own taste." When the Connecticut State Society of Cincinnati dissolved, a few of the members purchased it as a gift to Yale College.

GILBERT STUART's most cherished anticipation when he left England for America, was that of executing a portrait of Washington. A consummate artist in a branch which his own triumphs had proved could be rendered of the highest interest, he eagerly sought illustrious subjects for his pencil. This enthusiasm was increased in the present case, by the unsullied fame and the exalted European reputation of the American hero, by the greatest personal admiration of his character, and by the fact that no satisfactory representation existed abroad of a man whose name was identical with more than Roman patriotism and magnanimity. Stuart, by a series of masterly portraits, had established his renown in London; he had mingled in the best society; his vigorous mind was cognizant of all the charms that wit and acumen lend to human intercourse, and he knew the power which genius and will may so readily command. His own nature was more remarkable for strength than refinement; he was eminently fitted to appreciate practical talents and moral energy; the brave truth of nature rather than her more delicate effects, were grasped and reproduced by his skill; he might not have done justice to the ideal contour of Shelley, or the gentle features of Mary of Scotland, but could have perfectly reflected the dormant thunder of Mirabeau's countenance, and the argumentative abstraction that knit the brows of Samuel Johnson. He was a votary of truth in her boldest manifestations, and a delineator of character in its normal and sustained elements. The robust, the venerable, the moral picturesque, the mentally characteristic, he seized by intuition; those lines of physiognomy which channelled by will the map of inward life, which years of consistent thought and action trace upon the countenance, the hue that, to an observant eye, indicates almost the daily vocation, the air suggestive of authority or obedience, firmness or vacillation, the glance of the eye, which is the measure of natural intelligence and the temper of the soul, the expression of the mouth that infallibly betrays the disposition, the tint of hair and mould of features, not only attesting the period of life but revealing what that life has been, whether toilsome or inert, self-indulgent or adventurous, careworn or pleasurable — these, and such as these records of humanity, Stuart transferred, in vivid colors and most trustworthy outlines, to the canvas. Instinctive, therefore, was his zeal to delineate Washington; a man, who, of all the sons of fame, most clearly and emphatically wrote his character in deeds upon the world's heart, whose traits required no imagination to give them effect and no metaphysical insight to unravel their perplexity, but were brought out by the exigencies of the time in distinct relief, as bold, fresh, and true as the verdure of spring and the lights of the firmament, equally recognized by the humblest peasant and the most gifted philosopher.

To trace the history of each of Stuart's portraits of Washington would prove of curious interest. One of his letters to a relative, dated the 2d of November, 1794, enables us to fix the period of the earliest experiment. "The object of my journey," he says, "is only to secure a

portrait of the President and finish yours." One of the succeeding pictures was brought from the artist's studio by Mr. Tayloe, of Washington, and is, at present, owned by his son, B. Ogle Tayloe, Esq.; another was long in the possession of Madison, and is now in that of Gov. E. Coles, of Philadelphia. The full-length, in the Presidential mansion, at the seat of government, was saved through the foresight and care of the late Mrs. Madison, when the city was taken by the British in the last war. Stuart, however, always denied that this copy was by him. Another portrait of undoubted authenticity was offered to and declined by Congress, a few years ago, and is owned by a Boston gentleman; and one graced the hospitable dwelling of Samuel Williams, the London banker. For a long period artistic productions on this side of the water were subjects of ridicule. Tudor not inaptly called the New England country meeting-houses "wooden lanterns;" almost every town boasted an architectural monstrosity, popularly known as somebody's "folly;" the rows of legs in Trumbull's picture of the Signing of the Declaration, obtained for it the sarcastic name, generally ascribed to John Randolph, of "the shin piece;" and Stuart's full-length, originally painted for Lord Lansdowne, with one arm resting on his sword hilt, and the other extended, was distinguished among artists by the title of the "tea-pot portrait," from the resemblance of the outline to the handle and spout of that domestic utensil. The feature, usually exaggerated in poor copies, and the least agreeable in the original, is the mouth, resulting from the want of support of those muscles consequent on the loss of teeth, a defect which Stuart vainly attempted to remedy by inserting cotton between the jaw and the lips; and Wilson Peale more permanently, but not less ineffectually sought to relieve by a set of artificial teeth.

We have seen in Western New York, a cabinet head of Washington which bears strong evidence of Stuart's pencil, and is traced directly by its present owner to his hand, which was purchased of the artist and presented to Mr. Gilbert, a member of Congress from Columbia County, New York, a gentleman who held the original in such veneration that he requested, on his death-bed, to have the picture exhibited to his fading gaze, as it was the last object he desired to behold on earth. The remarks of the latter artist indicate what a study he made of his illustrious sitter; "There were," he said, "features in his face totally different from what he had observed in any other human being; the sockets of the eyes, for instance, were larger than what he ever met with before, and the upper part of the nose broader. All his features were indicative of the strongest passions; yet, like Socrates, his judgment and great self-command made him appear a man of a different cast in the eyes of the world." The color of his eyes was a light grayish blue, but according to Mr. Curtis, Stuart painted them of a deeper blue, saying, "in a hundred years they will have faded to the right color."

While Congress was in session at Philadelphia, in 1794, Stuart went thither with a letter of introduction to Washington, from John Jay. He first met his illustrious subject on a reception evening, and was spontaneously accosted by him with a greeting of dignified urbanity. Familiar as was the painter with eminent men, he afterwards declared that no human being ever awakened in him the sentiment of reverence to such a degree. For a moment he lost his self-possession—with him an experience quite unprecedented—and it was not until several interviews that he felt himself enough at home with his sitter to give the requisite concentration of mind to his work. This was owing not less to the personal impressiveness of Washington—which all who came in contact

with him felt and acknowledged — than to the profound respect and deep interest which the long anticipations of the artist had fostered in his own mind. He failed, probably from this cause, in his first experiment. No portrait-painter has left such a reputation for the faculty of eliciting expression by his social tact, as Stuart. He would even defer his task upon any pretext until he succeeded in making the sitter, as he said, “look like himself.” To induce a natural, unconscious, and characteristic mood, was his initiative step in the execution of a portrait. Innumerable are the anecdotes of his ingenuity and persistence in carrying out this habit. More or less conversant with every topic of general interest, and endowed with rare conversational ability and knowledge of character, he seldom failed to excite the ruling passion, magnetize the prominent idiosyncrasy, or awaken the professional interest of the occupant of his throne, whether statesman, farmer, actor, judge or merchant; and his fund of good stories, narrated with dramatic effect, by enchaining the attention or enlisting the sympathies, usually made the delighted listener self-oblivious and demonstrative, when, with an alertness and precision like magic, the watchful limner transferred the vital identity of his pre-occupied and fascinated subject, with almost breathing similitude. In Washington, however, he found a less flexible character upon which to scintillate his wit and open his anecdotal battery. Facility of adaptation seldom accompanies great individuality; and a man whose entire life has been oppressed with responsibility, and in whom the prevalent qualities are conscience and good sense, can scarcely be expected to possess humor and geniality in the same proportion as self-control and reflection. On the professional themes of agriculture and military science, Washington was always ready to converse, if not with enthusiasm, at least in an attentive and intelligent strain; but the artillery of repartee, and the sallies of fancy, made but a slight impression upon his grave and reserved nature. He was deficient in language — far more a man of action than of words — and had been obliged to think too much on vast interests, to “carry America in his brain,” as one of his eulogists has aptly said, to readily unbend in colloquial diversion. By degrees, however, the desirable relation was established between himself and the artist, who, of several portraits, justly gave the preference to the Lansdowne picture and the unfinished one now possessed by the Boston Athenæum. They, doubtless, are the most perfect representations of Washington, as he looked at the time they were executed, and will ever be the standards and resource of subsequent delineators. The latter, supposed by many to have been his original “study,” engaged his attention for months. The freshness of color, the studious modelling of the brow, the mingling of clear purpose and benevolence in the eye, and a thorough nobleness and dignity in the whole head, realize all the most intelligent admirer of the original has imagined — not, indeed, when thinking of him as the intrepid leader of armies, but in the last analysis and complete image of the hero in retirement, in all the consciousness of a sublime career, unimpeachable fidelity to a national trust, and the eternal gratitude of a free people. It is this masterpiece of Stuart that has not only perpetuated, but distributed over the globe the resemblance of Washington. It has been sometimes lamented, that so popular a work does not represent him in the aspect of a successful warrior, or in the flush of youth; but there seems to be a singular harmony between this venerable image — so majestic, benignant, and serene — and the absolute character and peculiar example of Washington, separated from what was purely incidental and contingent in his life. Self-control, endurance,



dauntless courage, loyalty to a just but sometimes desperate cause, hope through the most hopeless crisis, and a tone of feeling the most exalted, united to habits of candid simplicity, are better embodied in such a calm, magnanimous, mature image, full of dignity and sweetness, than if portrayed in battle array or melodramatic attitude. Let such pictures as David's Napoleon — with prancing steed, flashing eye, and waving sword — represent the mere victor and military genius; but he who spurned a crown, knew no watchword but duty, no goal but freedom and justice, and no reward but the approval of conscience and the gratitude of a country, lives more appropriately, both to memory and in art, under the aspect of a finished life, crowned with the harvest of honor and peace, and serene in the consummation of disinterested purpose.

A letter of Stuart's which appeared in the *New York Evening Post* in 1853,<sup>1</sup> attested by three gentlemen of Boston, with one from Washington making the appointment for a sitting, proves the error long current in regard both to the dates and the number of this artist's original portraits. He there distinctly states that he never executed but three from life, the first of which was so unsatisfactory that he destroyed it; the second was the picture for Lord Lansdowne; and the third, the one now belonging to the Boston Athenæum. Of these originals he made twenty-six copies. The finishing touches were put to the one in September, 1795, and to the other, at Philadelphia, in the spring of 1796. This last,

<sup>1</sup> Extract from article in *Evening Post*, N. Y., March 15th, 1853:

It may set this question at rest to state, that Stuart himself has given an account of all the portraits of Washington that he painted.

A gentleman of Philadelphia has in his possession the originals of the following documents. [*Edit. Post.*] —

SIR: — I am under promise to Mrs. Bingham, to sit for you to-morrow at nine o'clock, and wishing to know if it be convenient to you that I should do so, and whether it shall be at your own house (as she talked of the State-House). I send this note to you to ask information. — I am, sir, your obedient servt.,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

Monday Evening, 11th April, 1796.

This letter was indorsed in Washington's handwriting, — "Mr. Stuart, Chestnut Street." At the foot of the manuscript are the following certificates: —

In looking over my papers to find one that had the signature of George Washington, I found this, asking me when he should sit for his portrait, which is now owned by Samuel Williams, of London. I have thought it proper it should be his, especially as he owns the only original painting I ever made of Washington, except one I own myself. I painted a third, but rubbed it out. I now present this to his brother, Timo Williams, for said Samuel.

Boston, 9th day of March, 1820.

GT STUART.

Attest — J. P. DAVIS.

W. DUTTON.

L. BALDWIN.

B. — Mr. Stuart painted in ye *winter season* his first portrait of Washington, but destroyed it. The next painting was ye one owned by S. Williams; the third Mr. S. now has — two only remain, as above stated. T. W.

The picture alluded to in the above note of the late Timo Williams, as being then in Mr. Stuart's possession, is the one now in the Boston Athenæum: and that which belonged to the late Samuel Williams, Esq., alluded to in Mr. Stuart's note above quoted, is yet extant and owned by the son of an American gentleman (*John D. Lewis, Esq.*) who died in London some years since, where it still remains. Mr. Williams had paid for it at the sale of the personal effects of the Marquis of Lansdowne, — to whom it was originally presented by Mr. Bingham, of Philadelphia, — two thousand guineas.

It is this portrait, full length and life size, from which the had engraving was made by Heath, so many copies of which are still to be seen in this country.

It appears by a letter of Mr. Custis, which we have examined, was undertaken against the desire of Washington, and at the earnest solicitation of his wife, who wished a portrait from life of her illustrious husband, to be placed among the other family pictures at Mount Vernon. For this express purpose, and to gratify her, the artist commenced the work, and Washington agreed to sit once more. It was left, intentionally, unfinished, and when subsequently claimed by Mr. Custis, who offered a premium upon the original price, Stuart excused himself, much to the former's dissatisfaction, on the plea that it was a requisite legacy for his children. Simultaneously with the Lansdowne portrait the artist executed for William Constable that now in the possession of his grandson, Henry E. Pierpont, Esq., of Brooklyn, L.I. Motives of personal friendship induced the artist to exert his best skill in this instance; it is a fac-simile of its prototype, and the expression has been thought even more noble and of higher significance, more in accordance with the traditional character of the subject, than the Athenæum picture. It has the eyes looking off, and not at the spectator, as in the latter. Mr. Constable, the original proprietor, was aide to General Washington; and when Lafayette visited this country in 1824, upon entering the drawing-room at Brooklyn Heights, where the picture hangs, he exclaimed, "That is my old friend, indeed!" Colonel Nicholson Fish, and General Van Rensselaer, joined in attesting the superior correctness of the likeness.

The usual objection to Stuart's Washington is a certain feebleness about the lines of the mouth, which does not correspond with the distinct outline of the frontal region, the benign yet resolved eye, and the harmonious dignity of the entire head; but this defect was an inevitable result of the loss of teeth, and their imperfect substitution by a false set. In view of the state of the arts in this country at the period, and the age of Washington, we cannot but congratulate ourselves that we have so pleasing and satisfactory a portrait, and exclaim, with Leslie, "How fortunate it was that a painter existed in the time of Washington, who could hand him down looking like a gentleman!" Dr. Marshall, brother of the Chief Justice, said that Washington did not resemble Pine's portrait, when he knew him, that Wertmüller's had too French a look, another by Wertmüller had eyes too light, but that Stuart's was prodigiously "like."

Opinions are quite diverse in regard to the WERTMÜLLER portrait. There are many points of executive merit in the original not completely rendered in the engraving; the air of the head, the grave and refined look, well-arranged hair, neat ruffles, and old-fashioned coat, sprinkled at the shoulders with powder, at once gave the somewhat vague yet unmistakable impression of "the portrait of a gentleman." There is an expression of firmness and clear-sightedness, and an erect, brave attitude which reveals the soldier; and there is more animation than we are accustomed to see in portraits of Washington. The latter trait is probably that which led to the selection of this picture as an illustration to Irving's biography.

ADOLPHE ULRIC WERTMÜLLER was a devoted student of art, but his taste and style were chiefly formed under the influence of the old French Academy — and long before the delicate adherence to nature which now redeems the best modern pictures of French artists had taken the place of a certain artificial excellence and devotion to mere effect. The career of this accomplished painter was marked by singular vicissitudes: a native of Stockholm, after preparatory studies there, he went to Paris, and remained several years, acquiring both fame and fortune by his pencil; the latter, however, was nearly all lost by the financial disasters at the outbreak of the Revolution, and Wertmüller embarked for America,

and arrived in Philadelphia in 1794. He was well received and highly estimated; Washington sat to him;<sup>1</sup> in 1796 he returned to Europe, but, after a brief period, the failure of a commercial house at Stockholm, in whose care he had placed his funds, so vexed him that he returned to Philadelphia in 1800, where he soon after exhibited his large and beautiful picture of "Danæ" — which, while greatly admired for the executive talent it displayed, was too exceptional a subject to meet with the approbation of the sober citizens, whose sense of propriety was so much more vivid than their enthusiasm for art. Wertmuller soon after married a lady of Swedish descent, purchased a farm in Delaware county, Penn., and resided there in much comfort and tranquillity, until his death in 1812. His pictures were sold at auction; and a small copy of the "Danæ" brought \$500; the original, some years after, being purchased in New York for three times that sum. In an appreciative notice of him, which appeared soon after his death in a leading literary journal, there is the following just reference to his portrait of Washington: "It has been much praised and frequently copied on the continent of Europe; but it has a forced and foreign air, into which the painter seems to have fallen by losing sight of the noble presence before him, in an attempt after ideal dignity."<sup>2</sup>

Wertmuller was eminent in his day for miniatures and oil portraits. Our first knowledge of him was derived from the superb picture of Danæ, which, for some time, occupied a nook, curtained from observation, in the studio of the late Henry Inman, of New York, and it was exhibited in Washington City, thirty years ago. There was fine drawing and rich color in this voluptuous creation — enough to convey a high idea of the skill and grace of the artist. With this picture vividly in the mind, it is difficult to realize that the chaste, subdued portrait of Washington was from the same hand.

It was confidently asserted, that Washington invariably noted in his diary his sittings to portrait painters, and that no entry appears in reference to this picture. Its claim to originality was, therefore, questioned. With the impatience of the whole subject, however, that Washington confessed at last, he may have ceased to record what became a penance; and were the picture satisfactory in other respects, we should not be disposed to complain that it was skilfully combined from other portraits. But, in our view, the engraving, at least, has intrinsic faults. It is neither the Washington familiar to observation as portrayed, nor to fancy as idealized. There is a self-conscious expression about the mouth, not visible in Stuart's or Trumbull's heads, and out of character in itself; the eyebrows are raised so as to indicate either a supercilious or a surprised mood, both alien to Washington's habitual state of mind; it is impossible for the brows to be knit between the eyes, and arched over them at the same time, as in this engraving; the eyes themselves have a staring look; the animation so much wanted is here obtained at the expense of that serenity which was a normal characteristic of the man; we miss the modesty, the latent power, the placid strength, so intimately associated with the looks as well as the nature of Washington; the visage is too elongated; compared with the Athenæum portrait this picture has a commonplace expression; it does not approach it in moral elevation; we should pass it by in a gallery as the likeness of a gentleman and a brave officer, but not linger over it as the incarnation of disinterested, magnanimous, loyal courage, such as lent a certain uncon-

<sup>1</sup> See notice of Wertmuller in *Analectic Magazine*, 1815.

<sup>2</sup> *Analectic Magazine*.

scious, impressive, and superior aspect to Washington, and divided him, by an infinite distance, from the mob of vulgar heroes.

The latest and most triumphant attempt to embody and illustrate the features, form and character of Washington in statuary, was made by the late American sculptor—THOMAS CRAWFORD. How well he studied, and how adequately he reproduced the head of his illustrious subject, may be realized by a careful examination of the noble and expressive marble bust of Washington from his chisel, now in the possession of John Ward, Esq., of New York. Essentially, and as far as contour and proportions are concerned, based upon the model of Hudon,—this beautiful and majestic effigy is instinct with the character of its subject, so that while satisfactory in detail as a resemblance caught from nature, it, at the same time, is executed in a spirit perfectly accordant with the traditional impressions and the instinctive ideas whence we derive our ideal of the man, the chieftain, and the patriot; the moulding of the brow, the *pose* of the head, and especially the expression of the mouth, are not less expressive than effective. But the crowning achievement of this artist is his equestrian statue executed for the State of Virginia, and now the grand trophy and ornament of her Capitol. "When on the evening of his arrival, Crawford went to see, for the first time, his Washington in bronze at the Munich foundry, he was surprised at the dusky precincts of the vast area; suddenly torches flashed illumination on the magnificent horse and rider, and simultaneously burst forth from a hundred voices a song of triumph and jubilee; thus the delighted Germans congratulated their gifted brother and hailed the sublime work—typical to them of American freedom, patriotism, and genius. The Bavarian king warmly recognized its original merits and consummate effect; the artists would suffer no inferior hands to pack and despatch it to the sea-side; peasants greeted its triumphal progress; the people of Richmond were emulous to share the task of conveying it from the quay to Capitol Hill; mute admiration followed by ecstatic cheers, hailed its unveiling, and the most gracious native eloquence inaugurated its erection. We might descant upon the union of majesty and spirit in the figure of Washington, and the vital truth of action in the horse, the air of command and of rectitude, the martial vigor and grace, so instantly felt by the popular heart, and so critically praised by the adept in sculpture cognizant of the difficulties to overcome, and the impression to be absolutely conveyed by such a work in order to make it at once true to nature and to character; we might repeat the declaration that no figure, ancient or modern, so entirely illustrates the classical definition of oratory, as consisting in action, as the statue of Patrick Henry, one of the grand accessories of the work,—which seems instinct with that memorable utterance, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" By a singular and affecting coincidence, the news of Crawford's death reached the United States simultaneously with the arrival of the ship containing this colossal bronze statue of Washington—his "crowning achievement." In this work, the first merit is *naturalness*; although full of equine ardor, the graceful and noble animal is evidently subdued by his rider; calm power is obvious in the man; restrained eagerness in the horse; Washington's left hand is on the snaffle bridle, which is drawn back; he sits with perfect ease and dignity, the head and face a little turned to the left, as if his attention had just been called in that direction, either in expectancy, or to give an order; he points forward and a little upwards; the figure is erect, the chest thrown forward, the knees pressed to the

saddle, the heel nearly beneath the shoulder, and the sole of the foot almost horizontal. The seat is a military and not a hunting seat; the horse is recognized by one acquainted with breeds, as "a charger of Arab blood."

His hands were large, as became one inured to practical achievement; his forehead was of that square mould that accompanies an executive mind, not swelling at the temples, as in the more ideal conformation of poetical men; a calm and benevolent light usually gleamed from his eyes, and they flashed at times, with valorous purpose or stern indignation; but they were not remarkably large as in persons of more fluency, and foretold Washington's natural deficiency in language, proclaiming the man of deeds, not words; neither had they the liquid hue of extreme sensibility, nor the varying light of an unsubdued temperament; their habitual expression was self-possessed, serene and thoughtful. There was a singular breadth to the face, invariably preserved by Stuart, but not always by Trumbull, who often gives an aquiline and somewhat elongated visage; no good physiognomist can fail to see in his nose that dilatation of nostril and prominence of the ridge which belong to resolute and spirited characters; the distance between the eyes marks a capacity to measure distances and appreciate form and the relation of space; but these special traits are secondary to the carriage of the body, and the expression of the whole face, in which appear to have blended an unparalleled force of impression. When fully possessed of the details of his remarkable countenance, and inspired by the record of his career, we turn from the description of those who beheld the man, on horseback, at the head of an army, presiding over the national councils, or seated in the drawing-room, to any of the portraits, we feel that no artist ever caught his best look, or transmitted his features when kindled by that matchless soul. If we compare any selection of engravings with each other, so inferior are the greater part extant, we find such glaring discrepancies, that doubts multiply; and we realize that art never did entire justice to the idea, the latent significance, and the absolute character of Washington. There is dignity in Houdon's bust, an effective facial angle in the crayon of Sharpless, and elegance, wisdom, and benignity in Stuart's head; but what are they, each and all, in contrast with the visage we behold in fancy, and revere in heart? It has been ingeniously remarked, that the letters received by an individual indicate his character better than those he writes, because they suggest what he elicits from others, and thereby furnish the best key to his scope of mind and temper of soul; on the same principle the likeness drawn, not from the minute descriptions, but the vivid impressions of those brought into intimate contact with an illustrious character, are the most reliable materials for his portrait; they reflect the man in the broad mirror of humanity, and are the faithful daguerreotypes which the vital radiance of his nature leaves on the consciousness of mankind.

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## II.

## WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

[The original MS. of the Farewell Address, in Washington's handwriting, and with his revisions and alterations, having been purchased by JAMES LENOX, Esq., of New York, that gentleman caused a few copies of it, with some illustrative documents, to be printed for private distribution. By permission of Mr. Lenox it is here reprinted, with the alterations, and with his explanatory remarks.]

## PREFACE.

THIS reprint of Washington's Farewell Address to the people of the United States, is made from the original manuscript recently sold in Philadelphia by the administrators of the late Mr. David C. Claypoole, in whose possession it had been from the date of its first publication. The paper is *entirely* in the autograph of Washington: no one acquainted with his handwriting can inspect it, and doubt for a moment the statements to that effect made by Mr. Claypoole and Mr. Rawle.

Upon examining the manuscript, it was found that, in addition to its importance as an historical document, and its value from being in the autograph of Washington, it was of great interest as a literary curiosity, and threw light upon the disputed question of the authorship of the Address. It clearly shows the process by which that paper was wrought into the form in which it was first given to the public; and notes written on the margin of passages and paragraphs, which have been erased, prove, almost beyond a doubt, that this draft was submitted to the judgment of other persons. Such memoranda was unnecessary either for Washington's own direction on a subsequent revision, or for the guidance of the printer; but he might very naturally thus note the reasons which had led him to make the alterations before he asked the advice and opinion of his friends. It seems probable, therefore, that this is the very draft sent to General Hamilton and Chief Justice Jay, as related in the letter of the latter. Some of the alterations, however, were evidently made during the writing of the paper; for in a few instances a part, and even the whole, of a sentence is struck out, which afterwards occurs in the body of the address.

Mr. Claypoole's description of the appearance of the manuscript is very accurate. There are many alterations, corrections and interlineations: and whole sentences and paragraphs are sometimes obliterated. All these, however, have been deciphered without much trouble, and carefully noted.

It was thought best to leave the text in this edition as it was first printed: only two slight verbal variations were found between the corrected manuscript, and the common printed copies. All the interlineations and alterations are inserted in brackets [], and where, in any case, words or sentences have been struck out, either with or without corrections in the text to supply their place, these portions have been decli-

phered and are printed in notes at the foot of the page. The reader will thus be enabled to perceive at a glance the changes made in the composition of the Address; and if the draft made by General Hamilton, and read by him to Mr. Jay, should be published, it will be seen how far Washington adopted the modifications and suggestions made by them.

When this preface was thus far prepared for the press, an opportunity was afforded, through the kindness of John C. Hamilton, Esq., to examine several letters which passed between Washington and General Hamilton relating to the Address, and also a copy of it in the handwriting of the latter. It appears from the communications that the President, both in sending to him a rough draft of the document, and at subsequent dates, requested him to prepare such an Address as he thought would be appropriate to the occasion; that Washington consulted him particularly, and most minutely, on many points connected with it; and that at different times General Hamilton did forward to the President three drafts of such a paper. The first was sent back to him with suggestions for its correction and enlargement: from the second draft thus altered and improved, the manuscript now printed may be supposed to have been prepared by Washington, and transmitted for final examination to General Hamilton and Judge Jay; and with it the third draft was returned to the President, and may probably yet be found among his papers.

The copy in the possession of Mr. Hamilton is probably the second of these three drafts; it is very much altered and corrected throughout. In comparing it with that in Washington's autograph, the sentiments are found to be the same, and the words used are very frequently identical. Some of the passages erased in the manuscript are in the draft; three paragraphs, viz., those on pages 50, 51 and 52 have nothing corresponding to them in the draft; but a space is left in it, evidently for the insertion of additional matter. The comparison of these two papers is exceedingly curious. It is difficult to conceive how two persons could express the same ideas in substantially the same language, and yet with much diversity in the construction of the sentences, and the position of the words.

J. L.

NEW YORK, *April 12, 1850.*

## FAREWELL ADDRESS.

### FRIENDS, AND FELLOW-CITIZENS : —

The period for a new election of a Citizen, to administer the Executive Government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust [<sup>1</sup>], it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country — and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence

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<sup>1</sup> for another term

in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but [am supported by]<sup>1</sup> a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. — I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. — The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of affairs with foreign Nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea. —

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety; and [am persuaded]<sup>2</sup> whatever partiality [may be retained]<sup>3</sup> for my services, [that]<sup>4</sup> in the present circumstances of our country [you] will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions, [with]<sup>5</sup> which I first [undertook]<sup>6</sup> the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed [towards]<sup>7</sup> the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, [perhaps] still more in the eyes of others, has [strengthened]<sup>8</sup> the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. — Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it. [9]

In looking forward to the moment, which is [intended] to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgement [of]<sup>10</sup> that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country, — for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though [in usefulness unequal]<sup>11</sup> to my zeal. — If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that [12] under circumstances in which the Passions agitated in every direction were liable to [mislead],<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> act under

<sup>2</sup> under

<sup>3</sup> that

<sup>4</sup> accepted

<sup>5</sup> any portion of you may yet retain

<sup>6</sup> to

<sup>7</sup> even they

<sup>8</sup> not lessened

<sup>9</sup> May I also have that of knowing in my retreat that the involuntary errors, I have probably committed, have been the sources of no serious or lasting mischief to our country. I may then expect to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government; the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, I trust, of our mutual cares, dangers and labours.

In the margin opposite this paragraph is the following note in Washington's autograph also erased, "obliterated to avoid the imputation of affected modesty."

<sup>10</sup> demanded by

<sup>11</sup> unequal in usefulness

<sup>12</sup> the constancy of your support

<sup>13</sup> wander and fluctuate



amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging—in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism [the constancy of your support] was the essential prop of the efforts and [a]<sup>1</sup> guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to the grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows<sup>[2]</sup> that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of his beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained—that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory<sup>[3]</sup> of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop.—But a solicitude for your welfare which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, [urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer]<sup>4</sup> to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation<sup>[5]</sup>, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people.—These will be offered to you with the more freedom as you can only see in them, the disinterested warnings of a departing friend, who can [possibly] have no personal motive to bias his counsels.—[Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.]

Interwoven as the love of liberty is with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The Union of Government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you.—It is justly so;—for it is a main Pillar in the Edifice of your real independence; [the support] of your tranquillity at home; your peace abroad; of your safety; <sup>[6]</sup> of your prosperity <sup>[7]</sup>; of that very Liberty which you so highly prize.—But, as it is easy to foresee, that from [different]<sup>8</sup> causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth:—as this is the point in your [political] fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness;—that you should cherish <sup>[9]</sup> a cordial, habitual, and immoveable attachment [to it, accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alien-

<sup>1</sup> the      <sup>2</sup> the only return I can henceforth make      <sup>3</sup> or satisfaction

<sup>4</sup> encouraged by the remembrance of your indulgent reception of my sentiments on an occasion not dissimilar to the present, urge me to offer

<sup>5</sup> and experience      <sup>6</sup> in every relation      <sup>7</sup> in every shape      <sup>8</sup> various

<sup>9</sup> towards it

ate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.] <sup>1</sup>—

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest.—Citizens [by birth or choice of a common country],<sup>2</sup> that country has a right to concentrate your affections.—The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation <sup>3</sup> derived from local discriminations.—With slight shades of difference, you have the same Religion, Manners, Habits and political Principles.—You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together.—The Independence and Liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts—of common dangers, sufferings and success.—

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your Interest.—Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The *North* in an [unrestrained] <sup>4</sup> intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal Laws of a common government, finds in the production of the latter <sup>5</sup> great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise—and precious materials of manufacturing industry.—The *South*, in the same intercourse benefiting by the agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated;—and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted.—The *East*, in a like intercourse with the *West*, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home.—The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as *one Nation*. [Any other] <sup>6</sup> tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, [whether derived] <sup>7</sup> from its own separate strength or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign Power, must be intrinsically precarious.<sup>8</sup>

[<sup>9</sup> While [then] every part of our Country thus [feels] <sup>10</sup> an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts <sup>11</sup> [combined cannot fail to find] in the united mass of means and efforts [<sup>12</sup> greater strength,

<sup>1</sup> that you should accustom yourselves to reverence it as the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity, adapting constantly your words and actions to that momentous idea; that you should watch for its preservation with jealous anxiety, discountenance whatever may suggest a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and frown upon the first dawning of any attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the several parts.

<sup>2</sup> of a common country by birth or choice

<sup>3</sup> to be

<sup>4</sup> unfettered

<sup>5</sup> many of the peculiar

<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>7</sup> either

<sup>8</sup> liable every moment to be disturbed by the fluctuating combinations of the primary interests of Europe, which must be expected to regulate the conduct of the Nations of which it is composed.

<sup>9</sup> And <sup>10</sup> finds

<sup>11</sup> of it

<sup>12</sup> cannot fail to find

greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign Nations; and [what is]<sup>1</sup> of inestimable value! they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which [so frequently]<sup>2</sup> afflict neighboring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce; but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. — Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown Military establishments, which under any form of Government are inauspicious to liberty, and which [are to be regarded]<sup>3</sup> as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty: In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to [every]<sup>4</sup> reflecting and virtuous mind. — [and]<sup>5</sup> exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of Patriotic desire. — Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. — To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. — [We are authorized]<sup>6</sup> to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment. [7] With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, [affecting]<sup>8</sup> all parts of our country [9], while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be [reason]<sup>10</sup> to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands. [11] —

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that [any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by]<sup>12</sup> *Geographical* discriminations — *Northern* and *Southern* — *Atlantic* and *Western*; [whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local

<sup>1</sup> which is an advantage

<sup>2</sup> inevitably

<sup>3</sup> there is reason to regard

<sup>4</sup> any

<sup>5</sup> they

<sup>6</sup> 'Tis natural

<sup>7</sup> It may not possibly be found, that the spirit of party, the machinations of foreign powers, the corruption and ambition of individual citizens are more formidable adversaries to the Unity of our Empire than any inherent difficulties in the scheme. Against these the mounds of national opinion, national sympathy, and national jealousy ought to be raised.

<sup>8</sup> as

<sup>9</sup> have

<sup>10</sup> cause in the effect itself

<sup>11</sup> Besides the more serious causes already hinted as threatening our Union, there is one less dangerous, but sufficiently dangerous to make it prudent to be upon our guard against it. I allude to the petulance of party differences of opinion. It is not uncommon to hear the irritations which these excite vent themselves in declarations that the different parts of the United States are ill affected to each other, in menaces that the Union will be dissolved by this or that measure. Intimations like these are as indiscreet as they are intemperate. Though frequently made with levity and without really any evil intention, they have a tendency to produce the consequence which they indicate. They teach the minds of men to consider the Union as precarious; as an object to which they ought not to attach their hopes and fortunes: and thus chill the sentiment in its favour. By alarming the pride of those to whom they are addressed, they set ingenuity at work to depreciate the value of the thing, and to discover reasons of indifference towards it. This is not wise. — It will be much wiser to habituate ourselves to reverence the Union as the palladium of our national happiness: to accommodate constantly our words and actions in that idea, and to discountenance whatever may suggest a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned. (In the margin opposite this paragraph are the words, "not important enough.")

<sup>12</sup> our parties for some time past have been too much characterized by

interests and views.]<sup>1</sup> One of the expedients of Party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. — You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heartburnings which spring from these misrepresentations; — They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. — The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this [head.]<sup>2</sup> — They have seen, in the negotiation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the Treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the MISSISSIPPI. — They have been witnesses to the formation of two Treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign Relations towards confirming their prosperity. — Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the UNION by which they were procured? — Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their Brethren, and connect them with Aliens? —

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable. — No alliances however strict between the parts can be an adequate substitute. — They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. — Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government, better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. — This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. — Respect for its authority, compliance with its Laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government. — But the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole People, is sacredly obligatory upon all. — The very idea of the power and the right of the People to establish Government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established Government.

All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with [the real] design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. — They serve to organize faction, to give it

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<sup>1</sup> These discriminations, — the mere contrivance of the spirit of Party (always dexterous to seize every handle by which the passions can be wielded, and too skillful not to turn to account the sympathy of neighborhood), have furnished an argument against the Union as evidence of a real difference of local interests and views; and serve to hazard it by organizing larger districts of country, under the leaders of contending factions; whose rivalships, prejudices and schemes of ambition, rather than the true interests of the Country, will direct the use of their influence. If it be possible to correct this poison in the habit of our body politic, it is worthy the endeavors of the moderate and the good to effect it.

<sup>2</sup> subject.

an artificial and extraordinary force — to put, [1] in the place of the delegated will of the Nation, the will of a party; — often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; — and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests. — However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, [2] they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the People, and to usurp for themselves the reins of Government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion. —

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular opposition to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care [the]<sup>3</sup> spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretxts. — One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, [and thus to]<sup>4</sup> undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of Governments, as of other human institutions — that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing Constitution of a Country — that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion: — and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests in a country so extensive as ours, a Government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of Liberty is indispensable — Liberty itself will find in such a Government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. — [It is indeed little else than a name, where the Government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the Society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.]<sup>5</sup>

I have already intimated to you the danger of Parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on Geographical discriminations. — Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of Party, generally.

This Spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from [our]<sup>6</sup> nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the [human] mind. — It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controuled or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.[7]

<sup>1</sup> it<sup>2</sup> and purposes<sup>3</sup> a<sup>4</sup> to

<sup>5</sup> owing to you as I do a frank and free disclosure of my heart, I shall not conceal from you the belief I entertain, that your Government as at present constituted is far more likely to prove too feeble than too powerful.

<sup>6</sup> human

<sup>7</sup> In Republics of narrow extent, it is not difficult for those who at any time hold the reins of Power, and command the ordinary public favor, to overturn the established [constitution]<sup>1</sup> in favor of their own aggrandizement. — The same thing may likewise

<sup>1</sup> order

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. — But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an Individual: and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of Party are sufficient to make it the interest and the duty of a wise People to discourage and restrain it. —

It serves always to distract the Public Councils and enfeeble the Public administration. — It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access [to the Government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus, the policy and the will of one country, are subjected to the policy and will of another.] <sup>1</sup>

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the Administration of the Government, and serve to keep alive the Spirit of Liberty. — This within certain limits is probably true — and in Governments of a Monarchical cast, Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favour, upon the spirit of party. — But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. — From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose, — and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. — A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, [instead of warming, it should] <sup>2</sup> consume. —

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres; avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. — The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, [<sup>3</sup>] whatever [the form of government, a real] <sup>4</sup> despotism. — A just estimate of that love of power, and [<sup>5</sup>] proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. —

be too often accomplished in such Republics, by partial combinations of men, who though not in office, from birth, riches or other sources of distinction, have extraordinary influence and numerous [adherents.] <sup>1</sup> — By debauching the Military force, by surprising some commanding citadel, or by some other sudden and unforeseen movement the fate of the Republic is decided. — But in Republics of large extent, usurpation can scarcely make its way through these avenues. — The powers and opportunities of resistance of a wide extended and numerous nation, defy the successful efforts of the ordinary Military force, or of any collections which wealth and patronage may call to their aid. — In such Republics, it is safe to assert, that the conflicts of popular factions are the chief, if not the only inlets, of usurpation and Tyranny.

<sup>1</sup> through the channels of party passions. It frequently subjects the policy of our own country to the policy of some foreign country, and even enslaves the will of our Government to the will of some foreign Government.

<sup>2</sup> it should not only warm, but

<sup>3</sup> under

<sup>4</sup> forms, a

<sup>5</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> retainers

The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal [against]<sup>1</sup> invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. — To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. — If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the Constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. — But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the [customary]<sup>2</sup> weapon by which free governments are destroyed. — The precedent<sup>3</sup> must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or [transient]<sup>4</sup> benefit which the use<sup>5</sup> can at any time yield. —

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. — In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens. — The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. — A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. — Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. — Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure — reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. —

'Tis substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. — The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of Free Government. — Who that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric? —

[Promote then as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. — In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.] —<sup>6</sup>

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. — One method of preserving it is to use it as [sparingly]<sup>7</sup> as possible; — avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it — avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by [shunning]<sup>8</sup> occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of Peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution

<sup>1</sup> from<sup>2</sup> usual and natural<sup>3</sup> of its use<sup>4</sup> temporary<sup>5</sup> itself

<sup>6</sup> Cultivate industry and frugality, as auxiliaries to good morals and sources of private and public prosperity. — Is there not room to regret that our propensity to expense exceeds our means for it? Is there not more luxury among us and more diffusively, than suits the actual stage of our national progress? Whatever may be the apology for luxury in a country, nature in the Arts which are its ministers, and the cause of national opulence — can it promote the advantage of a young country, almost wholly agricultural, in the infancy of the Arts, and certainly not in the maturity of wealth?

(Over this paragraph in the original a piece of paper is wafered, on which the passage is written as printed in the text.)

<sup>7</sup> little<sup>8</sup> avoiding

of these maxims belongs to your Representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should [co-operate.]<sup>1</sup> To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue — that to have Revenue there must be taxes — that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant — that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the Government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate. —

Observe good faith and justice towards all Nations. [2] Cultivate peace and harmony with all. — Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? — It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind a magnanimous and too novel example of a People always guarded by an exalted justice and benevolence. — Who can doubt that in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. — Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that [permanent, inveterate]<sup>3</sup> antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded; and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. — The Nation, which indulges towards another [an]<sup>4</sup> habitual hatred or [an]<sup>6</sup> habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interests. — Antipathy in one nation against another<sup>6</sup> disposes each more readily to offer insult to injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. — Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. — The Nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to War the Government, contrary to [the best]<sup>7</sup> calculations of policy. The Government sometimes participates in the [national] propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; — at other times, it makes the animosity of the Nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. — The peace often, sometimes perhaps the Liberty, of Nations has been the victim. —

So likewise a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils. — Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one [8] the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification: It leads also to concessions to the favorite Nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions; [9] by unnecessarily

<sup>1</sup> coincide

<sup>2</sup> and cultivate peace and harmony with all, for in public as well as in private transactions, I am persuaded that honesty will always be found to be the best policy.

<sup>3</sup> rooted

<sup>4</sup> a

<sup>5</sup> a

<sup>6</sup> begets of course a similar sentiment in that other

<sup>7</sup> its own

<sup>8</sup> another

<sup>9</sup> lastly



parting with what ought to be retained,<sup>1</sup> and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld, and it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens [who devote themselves to the favorite Nation] facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity:—gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.—

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot.—How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, [I conjure you to] believe me, [fellow-citizens],<sup>2</sup> the jealousy of a free people ought to be [constantly]<sup>3</sup> awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government.—But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it.—Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and to serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other.—Real Patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.—

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations is, [in extending our commercial relations], to have with them as little *Political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled with [4] perfect good faith.—Here let us stop.—

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation.—Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns.—Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by [5] artificial [ties]<sup>6</sup> in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, [or]<sup>7</sup> the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course.—If we remain one People, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve [upon]<sup>8</sup> to be scrupulously respected.—When [9] belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will [not] lightly hazard the giving us provocation [10]; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by [11] justice shall counsel.—

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation?—Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?—Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humour or caprice?—

<sup>1</sup> 2dly<sup>2</sup> my friends<sup>3</sup> incessantly<sup>4</sup> circumspection indeed, but with<sup>5</sup> an<sup>6</sup> connection<sup>7</sup> in<sup>8</sup> to observe.<sup>9</sup> neither of two.<sup>10</sup> to throw our weight into the opposite scale;<sup>11</sup> our

'Tis our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances<sup>[1]</sup> with any portion of the foreign world; — so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it — for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to [existing]<sup>2</sup> engagements, ([I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs],<sup>3</sup> that honesty is [always] the best policy). — [I repeat it therefore let those engagements]<sup>4</sup> be observed in their genuine sense. — But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them. —

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to [temporary]<sup>5</sup> alliances for extraordinary emergencies. —

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and interest. — But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: — neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; — consulting the natural course of things; — diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; — establishing with powers so disposed — in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our Merchants and to enable the Government to support them — conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit; but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that 'tis folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors [from]<sup>6</sup> another, — that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character — that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. — There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from Nation to Nation. — 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my Countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope that they will make the strong and lasting impression, I could wish, — that they will controul the usual current of the passions or prevent our Nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of Nations. — But if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit; some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism, this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated. —

How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public Records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to You, and to the World. — To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting War in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan. — Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of Your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me: — uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

<sup>1</sup> intimate connections

<sup>2</sup> for I hold it to be as true in public as in private transactions,

<sup>3</sup> those must

<sup>4</sup> pre-existing

<sup>5</sup> occasional

<sup>6</sup> at

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, [<sup>1</sup>] I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest, to take a Neutral position. — Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness. —

[The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, [it is not necessary]<sup>2</sup> on this occasion [to detail.] I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all. — ]<sup>3</sup>

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every Nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of Peace and Amity towards other Nations. —

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. — With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my Administration, I am unconscious of intentional error — I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I [may] have committed many errors. — Whatever [they may be]<sup>4</sup> I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate [the evils to which they may tend.]<sup>5</sup> — I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansion of rest. [<sup>6</sup>]

(<sup>1</sup> and from men disagreeing in their impressions of the origin, progress, and nature of that war.)

<sup>2</sup> some of them of a delicate nature, would be improperly the subject of explanation.

<sup>3</sup> The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, some of them of a delicate nature, would be improperly the subject of explanation on this occasion. I will barely observe that according to my understanding of the matter, that right so far from being denied by any belligerent Power, has been virtually admitted by all. —

This paragraph is then erased from the word "conduct," and the following sentence interlined, "would be improperly the subject of particular discussion on this occasion. I will barely observe that to me they appear to be warranted by well-established principles of the Laws of Nations as applicable to the nature of our alliance with France in connection with the circumstances of the War and the relative situation of the contending Parties."

A piece of paper is afterwards wafered over both, on which the paragraph as it stands in the text is written, and on the margin is the following note: "This is the first draft, and it is questionable which of the two is to be preferred."

<sup>4</sup> I deprecate the evils to which they may tend, and

<sup>5</sup> them

<sup>6</sup> May I without the charge of ostentation add, that neither ambition nor interest has been the impelling cause of my actions — that I have never designedly misused any power confided to me nor hesitated to use one, where I thought it could redound to your benefit. May I without the appearance of affectation say, that the fortune with which I came into office is not bettered otherwise than by the improvement in the value of property which the quick progress and uncommon prosperity of our country have produced? May I still further add without breach of delicacy, that I shall retire without cause for a blush, with no sentiments alien to the force of those vows for the happiness of his country so natural to a citizen who sees in it the native soil of his progenitors and himself for four generations?

On the margin opposite this paragraph is the following note: "This paragraph may have the appearance of self-distrust and mere vanity."

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for [several]<sup>1</sup> generations;— I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good Laws under a free Government, — the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.<sup>2</sup>

GO. WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES, { 1793.  
19th September, {

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<sup>1</sup> four.

<sup>2</sup> The paragraph, beginning with the words, " May I without the charge of ostentation add," having been struck out, the following note is written on the margin of that which is inserted in its place in the text: — "Continuation of the paragraph preceding the last ending with the word 'rest.'"

III.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE  
DEATH OF WASHINGTON.

SPEECH OF JOHN MARSHALL IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE DECEMBER 19TH,  
1799.<sup>1</sup>

MR. SPEAKER, —

The melancholy event, which was yesterday announced with doubt, has been rendered but too certain. Our Washington is no more! The hero, the patriot, and the sage of America; the man on whom in times of danger every eye was turned, and all hopes were placed, lives now only in his own great actions, and in the hearts of an affectionate and afflicted people.

If, sir, it had even not been usual openly to testify respect for the memory of those whom Heaven has selected as its instruments for dispensing good to man, yet such has been the uncommon worth, and such the extraordinary incidents, which have marked the life of him whose loss we all deplore, that the whole American nation, impelled by the same feelings, would call with one voice for a public manifestation of that sorrow, which is so deep and so universal.

More than any other individual, and as much as to one individual was possible, has he contributed to found this our wide-spreading empire, and to give to the western world independence and freedom.

Having effected the great object for which he was placed at the head of our armies, we have seen him convert the sword into the ploughshare, and sink the soldier in the citizen.

When the debility of our federal system had become manifest, and the bonds which connected this vast continent were dissolving, we have seen him the chief of those patriots who formed for us a constitution, which, by preserving the union, will, I trust, substantiate and perpetuate those blessings which our Revolution had promised to bestow.

In obedience to the general voice of his country, calling him to preside over a great people, we have seen him once more quit the retirement he loved, and, in a season more stormy and tempestuous than war itself, with calm and wise determination pursue the true interests of the nation, and contribute, more than any other could contribute, to the establishment of that system of policy, which will, I trust, yet preserve our peace, our honor, and our independence.

Having been twice unanimously chosen the chief magistrate of a free

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<sup>1</sup> The intelligence of the death of Washington had been received the preceding day, and the House immediately adjourned. The next morning Mr. Marshall addressed this speech to the House.

people, we have seen him, at a time when his re-election with universal suffrage could not be doubted, afford to the world a rare instance of moderation, by withdrawing from his station to the peaceful walks of private life.

However the public confidence may change, and public affections fluctuate with respect to others, with respect to him they have, in war and in peace, in public and in private life, been as steady as his own firm mind, and as constant as his own exalted virtues.

Let us then, Mr. Speaker, pay the last tribute of respect and affection to our departed friend. Let the grand council of the nation display those sentiments which the nation feels. For this purpose I hold in my hand some resolutions, which I take the liberty of offering to the House.

*Resolved*, That this House will wait on the President, in condolence of this mournful event.

*Resolved*, That the Speaker's chair be shrouded with black, and that the members and officers of the House wear black during the session.

*Resolved*, That a committee, in conjunction with one from the Senate, be appointed to consider on the most suitable manner of paying honor to the memory of the man, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens.

LETTER FROM THE SENATE TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES.

SIR, —

23 DECEMBER, 1799.

The Senate of the United States respectfully take leave to express to you their deep regret for the loss their country sustains in the death of General George Washington.

This event, so distressing to all our fellow-citizens, must be peculiarly heavy to you, who have long been associated with him in deeds of patriotism. Permit us, sir, to mingle our tears with yours. On this occasion it is manly to weep. To lose such a man, at such a crisis, is no common calamity to the world. Our country mourns a father. The Almighty Disposer of human events has taken from us our greatest benefactor and ornament. It becomes us to submit with reverence to him "who maketh darkness his pavilion."

With patriotic pride we review the life of our Washington, and compare him with those of other countries who have been pre-eminent in fame. Ancient and modern times are diminished before him. Greatness and guilt have too often been allied; but his fame is whiter than it is brilliant. The destroyers of nations stood abashed at the majesty of his virtues. It reprov'd the intemperance of their ambition, and darkened the splendor of victory. The scene is closed, and we are no longer anxious lest misfortune should sully his glory; he has travelled on to the end of his journey, and carried with him an increasing weight of honor; he has deposited it safely, where misfortune cannot tarnish it, where malice cannot blast it. Favored of Heaven, he departed without exhibiting the weakness of humanity. Magnanimous in death, the darkness of the grave could not obscure his brightness.

Such was the man whom we deplore. Thanks to God, his glory is consummated. Washington yet lives on earth in his spotless example; his spirit is in Heaven.

Let his countrymen consecrate the memory of the heroic general, the patriotic statesman, and the virtuous sage. Let them teach their children never to forget, that the fruits of his labors and his example are their inheritance.

THE PRESIDENT'S ANSWER.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, —

23 DECEMBER, 1799.

I receive with the most respectful and affectionate sentiments, in this impressive address, the obliging expressions of your regret for the loss our country has sustained in the death of her most esteemed, beloved, and admired citizen.

In the multitude of my thoughts and recollections on this melancholy event, you will permit me to say, that I have seen him in the days of adversity, in some of the scenes of his deepest distress and most trying perplexities. I have also attended him in his highest elevation and most prosperous felicity, with uniform admiration of his wisdom, moderation, and constancy.

Among all our original associates in that memorable league of this continent, in 1774, which first expressed the sovereign will of a free nation in America, he was the only one remaining in the general government. Although with a constitution more enfeebled than his, at an age when he thought it necessary to prepare for retirement, I feel myself alone, bereaved of my last brother, yet I derive a strong consolation from the unanimous disposition which appears in all ages and classes, to mingle their sorrows with mine, on this common calamity to the world.

The life of our Washington cannot suffer by a comparison with those of other countries who have been most celebrated and exalted by fame. The attributes and decorations of royalty could only have served to eclipse the majesty of those virtues which made him, from being a modest citizen, a more resplendent luminary. Misfortune, had he lived, could hereafter have sullied his glory only with those superficial minds, who, believing that character and actions are marked by success alone, rarely deserve to enjoy it. Malice could never blast his honor, and envy made him a singular exception to her universal rule. For himself, he had lived long enough to life and to glory; for his fellow-citizens, if their prayers could have been answered, he would have been immortal; for me, his departure is at a most unfortunate moment. Trusting, however, in the wise and righteous dominion of Providence over the passions of men and the results of their actions, as well as over their lives, nothing remains for me but humble resignation.

His example is now complete; and it will teach wisdom and virtue to magistrates, citizens, and men, not only in the present age, but in future generations, as long as our history shall be read. If a Trajan found a Pliny, a Marcus Aurelius can never want biographers, eulogists, or historians.

JOHN ADAMS.

## JOINT RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS.

*December 23d. Resolved*, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That a marble monument be erected by the United States at the Capitol of the city of Washington, and that the family of General Washington be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it, and that the monument be so designed as to commemorate the great events of his military and political life.

*And be it further resolved*, That there be a funeral procession from Congress Hall to the German Lutheran Church, in memory of General George Washington, on Thursday the 26th instant, and that an oration be prepared at the request of Congress to be delivered before both Houses that day; and that the President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, be desired to request one of the members of Congress to prepare and deliver the same.

*And be it further resolved*, That it be recommended to the people of the United States, to wear crape on their left arm, as mourning, for thirty days.

*And be it further resolved*, That the President of the United States be requested to direct a copy of these resolutions to be transmitted to Mrs. Washington, assuring her of the profound respect Congress will ever bear for her person and character, of their condolence on the late afflicting dispensation of Providence; and entreating her to assent to the interment of the remains of General Washington in the manner expressed in the first resolution.

*Resolved*, That the President of the United States be requested to issue his proclamation, notifying to the people throughout the United States the recommendation contained in the third resolution.

*December 30th. Resolved*, That it be recommended to the people of the United States to assemble, on the twenty-second day of February next, in such number and manner as may be convenient, publicly to testify their grief for the death of General George Washington, by suitable eulogies, orations and discourses, or by public prayers.

*And it is further resolved*, that the President be requested to issue a proclamation for the purposes of carrying the foregoing resolutions into effect.



## IV.

## WASHINGTON'S WILL.

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN.

I, GEORGE WASHINGTON, of Mount Vernon, a citizen of the United States, and lately President of the same, do make, ordain and declare this instrument, which is written with my own hand, and every page thereof subscribed with my name,<sup>1</sup> to be my last WILL and TESTAMENT, revoking all others.

*Imprimis.* — All my debts, of which there are but few, and none of magnitude, are to be punctually and speedily paid, and the legacies, hereinafter bequeathed, are to be discharged as soon as circumstances will permit, and in the manner directed.

*Item.* — To my dearly beloved wife, *Martha Washington*, I give and bequeath the use, profit and benefit of my whole estate real and personal, for the term of her natural life, except such parts thereof as are specially disposed of hereafter. My improved lot in the town of Alexandria, situated on Pitt and Cameron streets, I give to her and her heirs forever; as I also do my household and kitchen furniture of every sort and kind, with the liquors and groceries which may be on hand at the time of my decease, to be used and disposed of as she may think proper.

*Item.* — Upon the decease of my wife, it is my will and desire that all the slaves whom I hold in my own right shall receive their freedom. To emancipate them during her life would, though earnestly wished by me, be attended by such insuperable difficulties, on account of their intermixture by marriage with the dower negroes, as to excite the most painful sensations, if not disagreeable consequences to the latter, while both descriptions are in the occupancy of the same proprietor; it not being in my power, under the tenure by which the dower negroes are held, to manumit them. And whereas, among those who will receive freedom according to this devise, there may be some, who, from old age or bodily infirmities, and others, who, on account of their infancy, will be unable to support themselves, it is my will and desire, that all, who come under the first and second description, shall be comfortably clothed and fed by my heirs while they live; and that such of the latter description as have no parents living, or, if living, are unable or unwilling to provide for them, shall be bound by the court until they shall arrive at the age of twenty-five years; and, in cases where no record can be produced, whereby their ages can be ascertained, the judgment of the court, upon its own view of the subject, shall be adequate and final. The negroes thus bound, are (by their masters or mistresses) to be taught to read and write, and to be brought up to some useful occupation, agreeably to the

<sup>1</sup> In the original manuscript, GEORGE WASHINGTON'S name was written at the bottom of every page.

laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, providing for the support of orphan and other poor children. And I do hereby expressly forbid the sale or transportation out of the said Commonwealth, of any slave I may die possessed of, under any pretence whatsoever. And I do, moreover, most pointedly and most solemnly enjoin it upon my executors hereafter named, or the survivors of them, to see that this clause respecting slaves, and every part thereof, be religiously fulfilled at the epoch at which it is directed to take place, without evasion, neglect, or delay, after the crops which may then be on the ground are harvested, particularly as it respects the aged and infirm; seeing that a regular and permanent fund be established for their support, as long as there are subjects requiring it; not trusting to the uncertain provision to be made by individuals. And to my mulatto man, *William*, calling himself *William Lee*, I give immediate freedom, or, if he should prefer it (on account of the accidents which have befallen him, and which have rendered him incapable of walking, or of any active employment), to remain in the situation he now is, it shall be optional in him to do so; in either case, however, I allow him an annuity of thirty dollars, during his natural life, which shall be independent of the victuals and clothes he has been accustomed to receive, if he chooses the last alternative; but in full with his freedom, if he prefers the first; and this I give him as a testimony of my sense of his attachment to me, and for his faithful services during the Revolutionary War.

*Item.* — To the trustees (governors, or by whatsoever other name they may be designated) of the Academy in the town of Alexandria, I give and bequeath, in trust, four thousand dollars, or in other words, twenty of the shares which I hold in the Bank of Alexandria, towards the support of a free school, established at and annexed to, the said Academy, for the purpose of educating such orphan children, or the children of such other poor and indigent persons, who are unable to accomplish it with their own means, and who, in the judgment of the trustees of the said seminary, are best entitled to the benefit of this donation. The aforesaid twenty shares I give and bequeath in perpetuity; the dividends only of which are to be drawn for and applied, by the said trustees for the time being, for the uses above mentioned; the stock to remain entire and untouched, unless indications of failure of the said bank should be so apparent, or a discontinuance thereof, should render a removal of this fund necessary. In either of these cases, the amount of the stock here devised is to be vested in some other bank or public institution, whereby the interest may with regularity and certainty be drawn and applied as above. And to prevent misconception, my meaning is, and is hereby declared to be, that these twenty shares are in lieu of, and not in addition to, the thousand pounds given by a missive letter some years ago, in consequence whereof an annuity of fifty pounds has since been paid towards the support of this institution.

*Item.* — Whereas, by a law of the Commonwealth of Virginia, enacted in the year 1785, the Legislature thereof was pleased, as an evidence of its approbation of the services I had rendered the public during the Revolution, and partly, I believe, in consideration of my having suggested the vast advantages which the community would derive from the extension of its inland navigation under legislative patronage, to present me with one hundred shares, of one hundred dollars each, in the incorporated Company, established for the purpose of extending the navigation of James River from the tide water to the mountains; and also with fifty shares, of £100 sterling each, in the corporation of another company, likewise established for the similar purpose of opening the navigation of

the River Potomac from the tide water to Fort Cumberland; the acceptance of which, although the offer was highly honorable and grateful to my feelings, was refused, as inconsistent with a principle which I had adopted and had never departed from, viz., not to receive pecuniary compensation for any services I could render my country in its arduous struggle with Great Britain for its rights, and because I had evaded similar propositions from other States in the Union; adding to this refusal, however, an intimation, that if it should be the pleasure of the legislature to permit me to appropriate the said shares to *public uses*, I would receive them on those terms with due sensibility; and this it having consented to, in flattering terms, as will appear by a subsequent law, and sundry resolutions, in the most ample and honorable manner;— I proceed after this recital, for the more correct understanding of the case, to declare; that, as it has always been a source of serious regret with me, to see the youth of these United States sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education, often before their minds were formed, or they had imbibed any adequate ideas of the happiness of their own; contracting too frequently, not only habits of dissipation and extravagance, but principles unfriendly to republican government, and to the true and genuine liberties of mankind, which thereafter are rarely overcome; for these reasons it has been my ardent wish to see a plan devised on a liberal scale, which would have a tendency to spread systematic ideas through all parts of this rising empire, thereby to do away local attachments and State prejudices, as far as the nature of things would, or indeed ought, to admit, from our national councils. Looking anxiously forward to the accomplishment of so desirable an object as this is (in my estimation), my mind has not been able to contemplate any plan more likely to effect the measure, than the establishment of a UNIVERSITY in a central part of the United States, to which the youths of fortune and talents from all parts thereof may be sent for the completion of their education, in all the branches of polite literature, in arts and sciences, in acquiring knowledge in the principles of politics and good government, and, as a matter of infinite importance in my judgment, by associating with each other and forming friendships in juvenile years, be enabled to free themselves in a proper degree from those local prejudices and habitual jealousies which have just been mentioned, and which, when carried to excess, are never-failing sources of disquietude to the public mind, and pregnant of mischievous consequences to this country. Under these impressions, so fully dilated,

*Item.*— I give and bequeath, in perpetuity, the fifty shares which I hold in the Potomac Company, (under the aforesaid acts of the Legislature of Virginia,) towards the endowment of a University, to be established within the limits of the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the general government, if that government should incline to extend a fostering hand towards it; and, until such seminary is established, and the funds arising on these shares shall be required for its support, my further will and desire is, that the profit accruing therefrom shall, whenever the dividends are made, be laid out in purchasing stock in the bank of Columbia, or some other bank, at the discretion of my executors, or by the Treasurer of the United States for the time being under the direction of Congress, provided that honorable body should patronize the measure; and the dividends proceeding from the purchase of such stock are to be vested in more stock, and so on, until a sum adequate to the accomplishment of the object is obtained; of which I have not the smallest doubt, before many years pass away, even if no aid or encouragement is given by the legislative authority, or from any other source.

*Item.* — The hundred shares which I hold in the James River Company, I have given and now confirm in perpetuity, to and for the use and benefit of Liberty Hall Academy, in the County of Rockbridge in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

*Item.* — I release, exonerate, and discharge the estate of my deceased brother, *Samuel Washington*, from the payment of the money which is due to me for the land I sold to *Philip Pendleton*, (lying in the county of Berkeley,) who assigned the same to him, the said *Samuel*, who by agreement was to pay me therefor. And whereas, by some contract (the purport of which was never communicated to me) between the said *Samuel* and his son, *Thornton Washington*, the latter became possessed of the aforesaid land, without any conveyance having passed from me, either to the said *Pendleton*, the said *Samuel*, or the said *Thornton*, and without any consideration having been made, by which neglect neither the legal nor equitable title has been alienated; it rests therefore with me to declare my intentions concerning the premises; and these are, to give and bequeath the said land to whomsoever the said *Thornton Washington* (who is also dead) devised the same, or to his heirs forever, if he died intestate; exonerating the estate of the said *Thornton*, equally with that of the said *Samuel*, from payment of the purchase money, which, with interest, agreeably to the original contract with the said *Pendleton*, would amount to more than a thousand pounds. And whereas two other sons of my said deceased brother *Samuel*, namely, *George Steptoe Washington*, and *Laurence Augustine Washington*, were, by the decease of those to whose care they were committed, brought under my protection, and, in consequence, have occasioned advances on my part for their education at college and other schools, for their board, clothing, and other incidental expenses, to the amount of near five thousand dollars, over and above the sums furnished by their estate, which sum it may be inconvenient for them or their father's estate to refund; I do for these reasons acquit them and the said estate from the payment thereof, my intention being, that all accounts between them and me, and their father's estate and me, shall stand balanced.

*Item.* — The balance due me from the estate of *Bartholomew Dandridge*, deceased, (my wife's brother,) and which amounted on the first day of October, 1795, to four hundred and twenty-five pounds, (as will appear by an account rendered by his deceased son, *John Dandridge*, who was the acting executor of his father's will,) I release and acquit from the payment thereof. And the negroes, then thirty-three in number, formerly belonging to the said estate, who were taken in execution, sold, and purchased in on my account, in the year (*blank*), and ever since have remained in the possession and to the use of *Mary*, widow of the said *Bartholomew Dandridge*, with their increase, it is my will and desire shall continue and be in her possession, without paying hire, or making compensation for the same for the time past, or to come, during her natural life; at the expiration of which, I direct that all of them who are forty years old and upwards shall receive their freedom; and all under that age, and above sixteen, shall serve seven years and no longer; and all under sixteen years shall serve until they are twenty-five years of age, and then be free. And, to avoid disputes respecting the ages of any of these negroes, they are to be taken into the court of the county in which they reside, and the judgment thereof, in this relation, shall be final and record thereof made, which may be adduced as evidence at any time thereafter, if disputes should arise concerning the same. And I further direct, that the heirs of the said *Bartholomew Dandridge* shall equally

share the benefits arising from the services of said negroes according to the tenor of this devise, upon the decease of their mother.

*Item.* — If *Charles Carter*, who intermarried with my niece *Betty Lewis*, is not sufficiently secured in the title to the lots he had of me in the town of Fredericksburg, it is my will and desire, that my executors shall make such conveyances of them as the law requires to render it perfect.

*Item.* — To my nephew, *William Augustine Washington*, and his heirs, (if he should conceive them to be objects worth prosecuting,) a lot in the town of Manchester, (opposite to Richmond,) No. 265, drawn on my sole account, and also the tenth of one or two hundred acre lots, and two or three half-acre lots, in the city and vicinity of Richmond, drawn in partnership with nine others, all in the lottery of the deceased *William Byrd*, are given; as is also a lot which I purchased of *John Hood*, conveyed by *William Willie* and *Samuel Gordon*, trustees of the said *John Hood*, numbered 139, in the town of Edinburgh, in the County of Prince George, State of Virginia.

*Item.* — To my nephew, *Bushrod Washington*,<sup>1</sup> I give and bequeath all the papers in my possession which relate to my civil and military administration of the affairs of this country. I leave to him also such of my private papers as are worth preserving; and at the decease of my wife, and before, if she is not inclined to retain them, I give and bequeath my library of books and pamphlets of every kind.

*Item.* — Having sold lands which I possessed in the State of Pennsylvania and part of a tract held in equal right with *George Clinton*, late governor of New York, in the State of New York, my share of land and interest in the Great Dismal Swamp, and a tract of land which I owned in the County of Gloucester, — withholding the legal titles thereto, until the consideration money should be paid — and having moreover leased and conditionally sold (as will appear by the tenor of the said leases) all my lands upon the Great Kenhawa, and a tract upon Difficult Run, in the County of Loudoun, it is my will and direction, that whensoever the contracts are fully and respectfully complied with, according to the spirit, true intent, and meaning thereof, on the part of the purchasers, their heirs or assigns, that then, and in that case, conveyances are to be made, agreeably to the terms of the said contracts, and the money arising therefrom, when paid, to be vested in bank stock; the dividends whereof, as of that also which is already vested therein, are to inure to my said wife during her life; but the stock itself is to remain and be subject to the general distribution hereafter directed.

*Item.* — To the *Earl of Buchan* I recommit the “Box made of the Oak that sheltered the great *Sir William Wallace*, after the battle of Falkirk,” presented to me by his Lordship, in terms too flattering for me to repeat, with a request “to pass it, on the event of my decease, to the man in my country, who should appear to merit it best, upon the same conditions that have induced him to send it to me.” Whether easy or not to select the man, who might comport with his Lordship’s opinion in this respect, is not for me to say; but, conceiving that no disposition of this valuable curiosity can be more eligible than the recommitment of it to his own cabinet, agreeably to the original design of the Gold-

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<sup>1</sup> As General Washington never had any children, he gave the larger part of his property to his nephews and nieces, and the children of Mrs. Washington’s son by her first marriage. The principal heir was *Bushrod Washington*, son of his brother, *John Augustine Washington*.

smith's Company of Edinburgh, who presented it to him, and, at his request, consented that it should be transferred to me, I do give and bequeath the same to his Lordship; and in case of his decease, to his heir, with my grateful thanks for the distinguished honor of presenting it to me, and more especially for the favorable sentiments with which he accompanied it.

*Item.* — To my brother, *Charles Washington*, I give and bequeath the gold-headed cane left me by *Dr. Franklin* in his will. I add nothing to it because of the ample provision I have made for his issue. To the acquaintances and friends of my juvenile years, *Lawrence Washington* and *Robert Washington*, of Chotanck, I give my other two gold-headed canes, having my arms engraved on them; and to each, as they will be useful where they live, I leave one of the spyglasses, which constituted part of my equipage during the late war. To my compatriot in arms and old and intimate friend, *Dr. Craik*, I give my bureau (or, as the cabinet-makers call it, tambour secretary) and the circular chair, an appendage of my study. To *Dr. David Stewart* I give my large shaving and dressing table, and my telescope. To the Reverend, now *Bryan, Lord Fairfax*, I give a Bible, in three large folio volumes, with notes, presented to me by the Right Reverend *Thomas Wilson*, Bishop of Sodor and Man. To General *de Lafayette* I give a pair of finely-wrought steel pistols, taken from the enemy in the Revolutionary War. To my sisters-in-law, *Hannah Washington* and *Mildred Washington*, to my friends, *Eleanor Stuart*, *Hannah Washington*, of Fairfield, and *Elizabeth Washington*, of Hayfield, I give each a mourning ring, of the value of one hundred dollars. These bequests are not made for the intrinsic value of them, but as mementoes of my esteem and regard. To *Tobias Lear* I give the use of the farm, which he now holds in virtue of a lease from me to him and his deceased wife, (for and during their natural lives,) free from rent during his life; at the expiration of which, it is to be disposed of as is hereinafter directed. To *Sallie B. Hayne*, (a distant relation of mine,) I give and bequeath three hundred dollars. To *Sarah Green*, daughter of the deceased *Thomas Bishop*, and to *Anne Walker*, daughter of *John Alton*, also deceased, I give each one hundred dollars, in consideration of the attachment of their fathers to me; each of whom having lived nearly forty years in my family. To each of my nephews, *William Augustine Washington*, *George Lewis*, *George Steptoe Washington*, *Bushrod Washington*, and *Samuel Washington*, I give one of the swords or cut-throats, of which I may die possessed; and they are to choose in the order they are named. These swords are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheath them for the purpose of shedding blood, except it be for self-defence or in defence of their country and its rights; and in the latter case, to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands to the relinquishment thereof.

And now, having gone through these specific devices, with explanations for the more correct understanding of the meaning and design of them, I proceed to the distribution of the more important part of my estate, in manner following: —

*FIRST.* — To my nephew, *Bushrod Washington*, and his heirs, (partly in consideration of an intimation to his deceased father, while we were bachelors, and he had kindly undertaken to superintend my estate during my military services in the former war between Great Britain and France, that if I should fall therein, Mount Vernon, then less extensive in domain than at present, should become his property,) I give and bequeath all that part thereof, which is comprehended within the following

limits, viz. Beginning at the ford of Dogue Run, near my Mill, and extending along the road, and bounded thereby, as it now goes; and ever has gone, since my recollection of it, to the ford of Little Hunting Creek, at the Gum Spring, until it comes to a knoll opposite to an old road, which formerly passed through the lower field of Muddy-Hole Farm; at which, on the north side of the said road, are three red or Spanish oaks, marked as a corner, and a stone placed; thence by a line of trees to be marked rectangular, to the back line or outer boundary of the tract between *Thomson Mason* and myself; thence with that line easterly (now double-ditching, with a post-and-rail fence thereon) to the run of Little Hunting Creek; thence with that run which is the boundary between the lands of the late *Humphrey Peake* and me, to the tide water of the said creek; thence by that water to Potomac River; thence with the river to the mouth of Dogue Creek; and thence with the said Dogue Creek to the place of beginning at the aforesaid ford; containing upwards of four thousand acres, be the same more or less, together with the mansion-house, and all other buildings and improvements thereon.

SECOND. — In consideration of the consanguinity between them and my wife, being as nearly related to her as to myself, as on account of the affection I had for, and the obligation I was under to, their father when living, who from his youth had attached himself to my person, and followed my fortunes through the vicissitudes of the late Revolution, afterwards devoting his time to the superintendence of my private concerns for many years, whilst my public employments rendered it impracticable for me to do it myself, thereby affording me essential services, and always performing them in a manner the most filial and respectful; for these reasons, I say, I give and bequeath to *George Fayette Washington* and *Lawrence Augustine Washington*, and their heirs, my estate east of Little Hunting Creek, lying on the River Potomac, including the farm of three hundred and sixty acres, leased to *Tobias Lear*, as noticed before, and containing in the whole, by deed, two thousand and twenty-seven acres, be it more or less: which said estate it is my will and desire should be equitably and advantageously divided between them, according to quantity, quality, and other circumstances, when the youngest shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, by three judicious and disinterested men; one to be chosen by each of the brothers, and the third by these two. In the mean time, if the termination of my wife's interest therein should have ceased, the profits arising therefrom are to be applied for their joint uses and benefit.

THIRD. — And whereas it has always been my intention, since my expectation of having issue has ceased, to consider the grandchildren of my wife in the same light as I do my own relations, and to act a friendly part by them; more especially by the two whom we have raised from their earliest infancy, namely, *Eleanor Parke Custis* and *George Washington Parke Custis*; and whereas the former of these hath lately intermarried with *Lawrence Lewis*, a son of my deceased sister, *Betty Lewis*, by which the inducement to provide for them both has been increased; wherefore, I give and bequeath to the said *Lawrence Lewis* and *Eleanor Parke Lewis*, his wife, and their heirs, the residue of my Mount Vernon estate, not already devised to my nephew, *Bushrod Washington*, comprehended within the following description, viz. All the land north of the road leading from the ford of Dogue Run to the Gum Spring as described in the devise of the other part of the tract to *Bushrod Washington*, until it comes to the stone and three red or Spanish oaks on the knoll; thence with the rectangular line to the back line (between Mr.

Mason and me); thence with that line westerly along the new double ditch to Dogue Run, by the tumbling dam of my Mill; thence with the said run to the ford aforementioned. To which I add all the land I possess west of the said Dogue Run and Dogue Creek, bounded easterly and southerly thereby; together with the mill, distillery, and all other houses and improvements on the premises, making together about two thousand acres, be it more or less.

FOURTH. — Actuated by the principle already mentioned, I give and bequeath to *George Washington Parke Custis*, the grandson of my wife, and my ward, and to his heirs, the tract I hold on Four Mile Run, in the vicinity of Alexandria, containing one thousand two hundred acres, more or less, and my entire square, No. 21, in the city of Washington.

FIFTH. — All the rest and residue of my estate real and personal, not disposed of in manner aforesaid, in whatsoever consisting, wheresoever lying, and whensoever found, (a schedule of which, as far as is recollected, with a reasonable estimate of its value, is hereunto annexed,) I desire may be sold by my executors at such times, in such manner, and on such credits, (if an equal, valid, and satisfactory distribution of the specific property cannot be made without,) as in their judgment shall be most conducive to the interests of the parties concerned; and the moneys arising therefrom to be divided into twenty-three equal parts, and applied as follows, viz. To *William Augustine Washington*, *Elizabeth Spotswood*, *Jane Thornton*, and the heirs of *Ann Ashton*, sons and daughters of my deceased brother, *Augustine Washington*, I give and bequeath four parts; that is, one part to each of them. To *Fielding Lewis*, *George Lewis*, *Robert Lewis*, *Howell Lewis*, and *Betty Carter*, sons and daughters of my deceased sister, *Betty Lewis*, I give and bequeath five other parts; one to each of them. To *George Steptoe Washington*, *Lawrence Augustine Washington*, *Harriet Parks*, and the heirs of *Thornton Washington*, sons and daughters of my deceased brother, *Samuel Washington*, I give and bequeath other four parts; one to each of them. To *Corbin Washington*, and the heirs of *Jane Washington*, son and daughter of my deceased brother, *John Augustine Washington*, I give and bequeath two parts; one to each of them. To *Samuel Washington*, *Frances Bull*, and *Mildred Hammond*, son and daughters of my brother *Charles Washington*, I give and bequeath three parts; one part to each of them. And to *George Fayette Washington*, *Charles Augustine Washington*, and *Maria Washington*, sons and daughter of my deceased nephew, *George Augustine Washington*, I give one other part; that is, to each a third of that part. To *Elizabeth Parke Law*, *Martha Parke Peter*, and *Eleanor Parke Lewis*, I give and bequeath three other parts; that is, a part to each of them. And to my nephews, *Bushrod Washington* and *Lawrence Lewis*, and to my ward, the grandson of my wife, I give and bequeath one other part; that is, a third thereof to each of them. And, if it should so happen that any of the persons whose names are here enumerated (unknown to me) should now be dead, or should die before me, that in either of these cases, the heir of such deceased person shall, notwithstanding, derive all the benefits of the bequest in the same manner as if he or she was actually living at the time. And, by way of advice, I recommend it to my executors not to be precipitate in disposing of the landed property, (herein directed to be sold,) if from temporary causes the sale thereof should be dull; experience having fully evinced, that the price of land, especially above the falls of the river and on the western waters, has been progressively rising, and cannot be long checked in its increasing value. And I particularly recommend it to such of the legatees (under this clause



of my will), as can make it convenient, to take each a share of my stock in the Potomac Company in preference to the amount of what it might sell for; being thoroughly convinced myself that no uses to which the money can be applied, will be so productive as the tolls arising from this navigation when in full operation, (and thus, from the nature of things, it must be, ere long,) and more especially if that of the Shenandoah is added thereto.

The family vault at Mount Vernon requiring repairs, and being improperly situated besides, I desire that a new one of brick, and upon a larger scale, may be built at the foot of what is commonly called the Vineyard Enclosure, on the ground which is marked out; in which my remains, with those of my deceased relations (now in the old vault) and such others of my family as may choose to be entombed there, may be deposited. And it is my express desire, that my corpse may be interred in a private manner, without parade or funeral oration.

LASTLY, I constitute and appoint my dearly beloved wife, *Martha Washington*, my nephews, *William Augustine Washington*, *Bushrod Washington*, *George Steptoe Washington*, *Samuel Washington*, and *Lawrence Lewis*, and my ward, *George Washington Parke Custis* (when he shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years,) executrix and executors of this my will and testament; in the construction of which it will be readily perceived, that no professional character has been consulted, or has had any agency in the draft; and that, although it has occupied many of my leisure hours to digest, and to throw it into its present form, it may, notwithstanding, appear crude and incorrect; but, having endeavored to be plain and explicit in all the devises, even at the expense of prolixity, perhaps of tautology, I hope and trust that no disputes will arise concerning them. But if, contrary to expectation, the case should be otherwise, from the want of legal expressions, or the usual technical terms, or because too much or too little has been said on any of the devises to be consonant with law, my will and direction expressly is, that all disputes (if unhappily any should arise) shall be decided by three impartial and intelligent men, known for their probity and good understanding, two to be chosen by the disputants, each having the choice of one, and the third by those two; which three men, thus chosen, shall, unfettered by law or legal constructions, declare their sense of the testator's intention; and such decision is, to all intents and purposes, to be as binding on the parties as if it had been given in the Supreme Court of the United States.

*In witness of all and of each of the things herein contained, I have set my hand and seal, this ninth day of July, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety,<sup>1</sup> and of the Independence of the United States the twenty-fourth.*

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

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<sup>1</sup> It appears that the testator omitted the word "nine."



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